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# THE RUSSIAN REVIEW



*An American Journal  
Devoted to Russia  
Past and Present*

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## Contributors to This Issue

**WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN**, foreign correspondent in Soviet Russia for *The Christian Science Monitor*, 1922-1933, is author of *Russia's Iron Age*, *The History of the Russian Revolution*, and other works.

**ROGER DOW**, born in Arkansas, student of Russian history and Russian-American relations, is connected with the history department at Harvard College.

**N. S. TIMASHEFF** lectured at Harvard, 1936-1940, having previously served on the faculties of several European Universities; at present is Assistant Professor of Sociology in Fordham University; his latest important work is *An Introduction to the Sociology of Law*, Cambridge, 1939.

**VLADIMIR NABOKOV**, one of the most distinguished of contemporary Russian writers, recently came to this country and is now lecturing at Wellesley College. His latest novel, *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*, has just been published by New Directions.

**ERNEST J. SIMMONS**, Professor of Russian and English Literature at Cornell University, biographer of Pushkin and Dostoevsky, is at present engaged in writing a life of Tolstoy.

**MARK ALDANOV** is recognized as one of the foremost Russian historical novelists; his books have been translated into a total of twenty-three languages.

**HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW DANA**, author of the *Handbook on Soviet Drama* and an authority on the Russian theatre, has served on the faculties of Columbia and the University of Paris and spent several years studying the theatre in the Soviet Union.

**HELEN ISWOLSKY**, author, journalist, collaborator with Nikolai Berdyaeff and Jacques Maritain, is the daughter of the Russian Ambassador to France during the First World War; a recent arrival in the United States, she is now at work on a new book.

**ALEXANDER NAZAROFF**, well known as a literary critic and contributor to the *New York Times Book Review*, in recent years has been engaged in analyzing international problems and economic conditions in the Soviet Union for New York publications.

**XENIA J. EUDIN**, a native of the Ukraine, attended the Moscow University for Women and the University of London; at present is Research Associate, Hoover Library, Stanford University.

**E. C. ROPES** was educated in private schools in St. Petersburg and New York, and Columbia College; spent 1919-1923 in Russia and Estonia and since 1925 has been regional specialist on Russia for Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce in Washington, D. C.



General  
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# THE RUSSIAN REVIEW

*An American Journal Devoted to Russia  
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Vol. 1

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All dates pertaining to Russia prior to the introduction of the new style (Gregorian Calendar) on February 1, 1918, are according to the old style.

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## Foreword

BY WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

**O**F THE NEED for a review that would endeavor to interpret Russia as it has been, as it is, as it may be in the future, there can be no doubt. Russia is much less known to Americans than its size, its political importance, and its contributions to culture would warrant. Even the educated American rarely possesses the same grasp of the main facts of Russian history that he would have in regard to the history of the countries of Western Europe. The most brilliant and imaginative history of Russia by a Russian, that of Klyuchevsky, is unfortunately available in English only in an inferior translation.

While there is a substantial quantity of books about Russia since the Revolution, the quality of many of these works leaves much to be desired. Far too many have been published for propaganda purposes, or on the basis of a very limited first-hand acquaintance with the country which they profess to describe.

Especially during the last few years, the paucity of available material about many aspects of Russian life has been distressing to serious students. Very few foreigners were able to visit the country, and newspaper correspondence was largely restricted to routine agency dispatches. Not for years has it been possible to read an impartial foreigner's detailed description of the collective farms of the Soviet Union, or of the functioning of the new industries. Such reports on Russia as have appeared have been of the inevitably superficial train-window variety. No doubt the shadow of war, which became a reality on June 22, 1941, furnishes the explanation for the steady contraction of facilities for first-hand study and observation which has been so marked in Russia.

In view of these circumstances, and because of Russia's tremendous significance, both in Europe and in Asia, for the present phase of the world conflict, there is an abundance of functions for a review which will endeavor to cast the maximum amount of light on Russia, past and present. As is evident from the table of contents of the first issue, the review is not a specialized journal, but is rather concerned with giving a broad panorama of the Russian scene, historical, political, economic, cultural.

The review is not committed to any partisan interpretation of Russian history or of the Russian Revolution. It offers its hospitality to authors of quite divergent viewpoints, provided that they possess the quality of competent knowledge of the subject which they propose to discuss.

Completely aloof objectivity is not easy to attain in dealing with a country

which twenty-four years ago experienced one of the most gigantic social upheavals in history. It seems probable that more is to be gained by giving contributors full freedom of expression and letting divergent viewpoints balance each other than by attempting to enforce any kind of unreal uniformity of judgment.

At the same time the review will endeavor to avoid the use of its columns for propaganda, whether of the "pro" or "anti" variety and will encourage positive discussion, rather than sterile debates which may well lose much of their significance because of the swift march of events in Russia.

The vast upheaval of 1917 and its after-effects cannot obscure the fact that there are certain elements of continuity in the Russian historical tradition. One of the most conspicuous of these elements is the enormous vitality and recuperative power of the Russian people. Few peoples have passed through a harder historical school. Russian history is filled with records of famine, of devastating foreign invasions and costly foreign wars, of internal upheavals that shook the state to its foundation.

Yet, although countless Russians perished as individuals, although whole classes were sometimes physically uprooted and largely destroyed, Russia survived and gradually extended its political domination to the Baltic and Black Seas and to the remote Pacific Ocean. Crises that would have perhaps meant the permanent national decline of smaller and weaker peoples were overcome in the end by this extraordinary Russian faculty of recuperation from the hardest blows and adaptation to the most unfavorable circumstances. Klyuchevsky, after describing some of the extreme hardships of the early Muscovite state, sets down the following significant comment:

"Thus developed the Muscovite state. Now we can scarcely understand and still less feel what sacrifices its creation cost the people's welfare, how it pressed upon private existence."

Klyuchevsky wrote these lines in a relatively calm and sheltered period of Russian history. It is safe to say that the generation which has grown up in Russia since 1917 would have the keenest appreciation of how the state can demand the utmost sacrifices from the individual in order to promote its own growth and strength. Yet, after all the stern experiences of the Revolution and civil war, and of the extreme hardships which accompanied the first years of maximum industrialization, from 1929 until 1933, the Russian people possess enough vitality to offer the strongest resistance that the German military machine has encountered on land.

Geographical circumstances have placed before Russia, under whatever form of government it may be living, the necessity of solving two problems. Situated on the enormous borderland between Europe and Asia, with extensive territories in both continents, Russia has always been, to some extent, a bridge between these two continents, politically and culturally. There is a marked Oriental influence in Russian music, and, to a lesser extent, in art

and literature. Both before and after the Revolution, Russian explorers and scientists have devoted themselves to problems of Oriental exploration and research.

Unlike some of the more homogeneous peoples of Western Europe, Russia has always been a state with a mixture of nationalities. Tartars, Bashkirs, Mordvians, Kalmucks, and other Eastern peoples live with Russians in the vast valleys of the Volga and its major tributary, the Kama. The Ukrainians in the South possess their distinct language and for centuries maintained a precarious autonomy under the influence of such neighboring states as Muscovite Russia, Poland, Turkey, and the Crimea. The picturesque mountainous regions of the Caucasus are filled with non-Russian peoples, such as the Georgians, the Armenians, the Turkish tribes of Azerbaidjan, and many others. Russian colonists are mingled with non-Russian native inhabitants in Siberia and in Central Asia.

The Soviet government has tried to find a solution for the multi-national character of the Russian state by combining centralized dictatorial rule from Moscow with toleration and even encouragement of the use of native languages in schools, courts, and public business, in regions where the non-Russians are in the majority. In one way or another this nationality problem will certainly bulk large in the future of Russia.

The gifted Russian modern philosopher, Nikolai Berdyaev, along with other observers, has pointed to the many links between Old and New Russia. One of the most obvious of these psychological links is the tendency to think in terms of absolute values. Skepticism and liberalism have never penetrated deeply into the Russian national consciousness. However widely certain outward aspects of Tsarist and Soviet Russia might vary, both these political orders were conceived as something absolute and uncontrolled.

Another characteristic of Russia has been to achieve change through the method of violent upheaval, rather than through that of gradual progress. Long periods of comparative passivity have been broken by episodes of the most extreme turmoil and ferment. Varied examples of this same tendency are to be found in the Troubled Times, in the sweeping innovations of Peter the Great, in the Revolution of 1917, in the second period of revolutionary overturn and uprooting which began with the drive for maximum industrialization and for the collectivization of agriculture in 1929.

Russia's method of historical development has been in striking contrast to that of England, with its measured gradualness and absence of violent internal strife and shocks. This is another reason why it is hard for the Anglo-Saxon mind to understand Russia and why there is so much room for a broad interpretative effort in regard both to the Russian past and to the Russian present.

There has been general amazement at the stubbornness and tenacity of the Russian resistance to the German invasion. Indeed it is possible that



there has been a certain swing of public opinion from one mistaken extreme to the other. Predictions of an immediate, or almost immediate, collapse of the Russian armies were confounded by the course of events. It would be unwise, however, to assume that the Soviet régime is invincible or that some very dark days may not lie ahead.

In considering why Russia opposed Hitler more effectively than any other land power, several factors must be taken into consideration. A younger generation has grown up in Russia that is thoroughly indoctrinated with Soviet ideas and that is physically and mentally toughened for a supreme war effort. Moreover, Russians of all classes have evidently followed an old tradition in rallying to the defense of their country against foreign invasion.

This irrepressible Russian national spirit finally saved the country from the turbulent anarchy of the Troubled Times. It could be seen in the first years of the World War when Russian liberals and a majority of Russian revolutionaries declared a truce in their antagonism to the autocracy and advocated wholehearted defense of Russia against German invasion.

Moreover, the industrialization which was pushed through at such tremendous cost in human suffering was definitely advantageous, from the military standpoint. It gave Russia a larger supply of tanks, airplanes, and other modern weapons than any other power, except perhaps Germany. And the Soviet economic system, whatever may be thought of it as a means of promoting a high standard of living under normal conditions, was in many respects the type of system to which every country must come in time of war, when total mobilization of all human and material resources is necessary.

Finally, Russia's enormous size and population constituted an important advantage. A country that is approximately forty times the size of France, that is about two and a half times as large as the United States, is obviously not susceptible to the Blitzkrieg method of attack.

Some of the comment on the present Russian resistance overlooks Russian military achievements in the past. Napoleon had to fight some of his hardest battles against Russian troops. If the present Russian army has held out against Hitler's war machine for four months, the Imperial Russian Army stood up against the onslaught of Imperial Germany for almost three years and only disintegrated under the influence of the Revolution in 1917.

A marked feature of Russian history has been the effect of external shocks on internal development. The first consciously liberal revolt, the uprising of the Decembrists in 1825, was a direct sequel to the Napoleonic Wars. It was led by officers who had lived abroad and who had been affected by the stirrings both of French revolutionary ideas and of the budding German romanticism.



The Crimean War, with its revelation of the military weakness of the stern autocracy of Nicholas I, helped to pave the way for the liberation of the serfs. The war with Japan was by no means the least important influence in promoting the revolutionary ferment of 1904-05. The First World War placed on the Tsarist political, social, and economic system a strain beyond its power of endurance. This war was very definitely the parent of bolshevism.

Now Russia again faces the ordeal of a gigantic struggle. And one of the few things which may be predicted with reasonable assurance is that the Soviet Union will never return to the *status quo* of June 22, 1941. Too many new forces will have been set in motion by the war and the unfettered popular energy which must be unloosed if the war is to be won.

Whether these changes will be symbolized by some dramatic and violent shift of leadership or whether they will take place within the framework of the existing system cannot be foreseen. But changes, and important changes there will be, unless a long established Russian tradition of internal development and change under the impact of external shock is to be denied.

One of the reasons why most Russian liberals and radicals were in favor of their country's participation in the First World War was the hope that political association with the Western democratic countries would lead to a modification of the existing régime in a more liberal direction. Now, in a certain sense, this situation is being repeated. No doubt many Russians at home, who must still be inarticulate, and Russians abroad, who can express their feelings freely, would agree in the hope that out of the "blood, sweat, and tears" of the present ordeal will emerge, by some play of events the outlines of which cannot now be foreseen with precision, a Free Russia as part of a Free Europe.

# Prostor

## A Geopolitical Study of Russia and the United States\*

BY ROGER DOW

### I

**I**N SIZE and continental character, Russia and the United States possess a common trait which has dictated that their expansion and cohesion into nations should follow parallel lines. In both countries the most important geopolitical factor has been space, and the chief result has been colonialism. The interrelation of these two has produced a frontier on a vast scale and a species of regionalism differing from those in any other modern empire, and has given the two nations certain national attitudes, national characteristics, and national policies of striking similarity.

The origins and historical development of Russia and the United States followed lines laid down by the logic of geography. The American Republic began as a handful of colonies scattered along the broad reaches of the Atlantic seaboard which, after winning their independence and achieving formal unity at the end of the eighteenth century, proceeded to send pioneers pushing westward across the plains for thousands of miles until the continent was spanned and lands annexed.

Russia's march to the Pacific across the vast area of Siberia was accomplished with the same rapidity and in exactly the same way. Neither waited to settle. California's admission to the Union in 1850 found her separated from her nearest sister state by many a lonely mile, as the establishment of Nikolayevsk-on-Amur made it an isolated outpost of empire far removed from the mother country.

Russian expansion properly begins with Ivan IV and the establishment of the Tsardom of Moscow. Ivan inherited a cluster of principalities near the Baltic and Black Sea watershed, which had been gradually acquired by purchase, by pacts, and by conquest, and welded into an independent state by his predecessors. The realm of their former suzerains, the Tartars, on the other hand, had gradually disintegrated until it was split into several

\*This article is based on the material collected by Alexander Tarsaidzé and Roger Dow for their book, *Czars and Presidents*, to be published late in 1942. The author of the present article is indebted to his collaborator and friend for much of the material that follows.

dissociated khanates of which Kazan was the nearest and most dangerous to Muscovy.

Holding high the cross of Dmitri Donskoi and shouting "Lord! In Thy Name we go forth!" Ivan's warriors stormed the walls of Kazan and, in taking the city and its territory, found themselves the heirs to a vast territory beyond. For the city of Kazan sits astride the Volga near its junction with the turbulent Kama, and it commands the river-routes and roads to the north, east, and south as St. Louis controls the Mississippi, the Missouri, and the road to the west.

With Kazan in his hands, Ivan moved rapidly down the Volga to seize the khanate of Astrakhan with the Volga delta and a stretch of Caspian Sea coast. These conquests, together with the final pacification of Novgorod, are comparable in Russian history to the American acquisition of the Ohio country in the final settlement with Great Britain after the War of Independence. When Tsar Michael added the region between the Volga and the Ural rivers, he rounded off the tsardom somewhat as the Florida cession had rounded off the United States on the southeast. In strategic value, however, it was less like Florida than, perhaps, the Gadsden Purchase, for the Floridas completed the vital break in the seacoast that gave the Americans complete mastery of their southern and eastern maritime approaches from New Orleans to Maine. The Caspian, on the other hand, is a land-locked sea.

Throughout her history Muscovy's imperative need was an outlet to the sea, for while the United States held the keys to her front and side-doors almost from the beginning, Muscovy never really got her keys. The conquest of Novgorod brought access to the White Sea during part of the year, and had Ivan IV been able to break through to the Baltic, he might have gained a foothold there, but his long and disastrous Livonian Wars ended in tragic failure.

Since the Caspian was no good, the Baltic could not be reached, and the White Sea was inaccessible for several months each year, Ivan's successors pushed towards the warm waters of the south. In three waves, extending over more than a century, the Muscovites conquered South Russia and reached the Black Sea. The first wave under Tsar Alexis brought in the ancient cradle of the Russian people, once the center of a great civilization, but since the coming of the Tartars and the endless civil wars a blood-drenched land known as the *Moskovskaya Ukraina*—the Muscovite Frontier. It is still called Ukraine by many, though the Muscovites eventually dubbed it Little Russia in distinction from Great, or metropolitan, Russia. The next wave under Empress Anna added a real "New Muscovy," and completed the pacification of the Dnieper Valley to the rapids, and finally Catherine the Great reached the Sea with "New Russia," the *Zaporozhie*, or lands beyond the rapids.

This was Russia's Louisiana Purchase. Louisiana doubled the area of the United States, gave her control of the essential Mississippi Valley with its delta and New Orleans, removed any potential danger from France as Ohio had removed the potential danger from Britain, and brought the United States for the first time to the Gulf and into irritating proximity with Mexico. Russia's southern conquests gave her vast and fertile new lands with the control of the essential Dnieper Valley, protection of the mouth of the Don, and her first Black Sea coast, removed any further danger from the Tartars, and brought her into irritating proximity with Turkey.

Here again, as with the approaches to the Atlantic, geography was a friend to the United States and an enemy to Russia, for the Black Sea emptied through a narrow channel held by a strong state, and the Russian equivalent of New Orleans, Constantinople, lay not at the mouth of the Dnieper but many miles beyond. The United States would have faced an analogous situation had the Gulf of Mexico been closed and open on the west only through one narrow channel at the isthmus of Panama, with New Orleans on both sides of this channel and Great Britain determined that it should never fall into American hands. The United States' position vis-à-vis Mexico would then have been identical with Russia's vis-à-vis Turkey, and a major part of American foreign policy would have been directed towards conquering or immobilizing this Mexican Constantinople. Instead of a Mexican War there would have been several Mexican Wars.<sup>1</sup>

Since New Orleans did not lie in Mexico, the United States contented herself with the annexation of Texas, New Mexico, the rest of Colorado, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and California, the central and southeastern parts of which are equivalent in some ways to Catherine the Great's partitions of Poland and Alexander I's annexation of Bessarabia and the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. Unfortunately for Russia, her Polish lands were full of Poles who were allergic to Russian sovereignty, whereas the Mexican annexations had fewer Mexicans in proportion to the colonists from the United States. Thus, San Antonio never became a focus of insurrection as Warsaw did, though the United States prudently kept its greatest army post there.

With all these annexations Russia would have remained an inland country and the prey of foreign marauders had Peter I not justly earned his title of Great and founded the Russian Empire by finally breaking through to the Baltic. Peter's window on the west at St. Petersburg could be paralleled in American history only by supposing America to be joined to Europe below

<sup>1</sup>There were many Americans who regretted that the Mexican War had not brought the United States all of Spanish America as far as the isthmus of Panama, anyway. Writing a few years after the war, a Cincinnati clergyman called Mexico "the Turkey of the western hemisphere" and said that neither Mexico nor Turkey had any element of permanent life. "Turkey will vanish at last in the same manner that Mexico will melt away before the steady advance of the United States." Charles B. Boynton, *The Russian Empire*, Cincinnati, 1856, pp. 108-109.

New Jersey, and that in the settlement after the Revolution, Canada had managed to retain New Jersey, New England, and the Hudson Valley. Inevitably the desperate need of the United States for access to the sea would have forced her to break through these artificial bands as Russia broke through hers.

## II

In her conquests bordering on Europe and the Caucasian highlands Russia added alien populations, but elsewhere her annexations were chiefly of lands colonized from Muscovy or Kiev. The trail-breakers were the Cossacks, sometimes of Great Russian and sometimes of Little Russian origin, but like the American frontiersmen a social and not an ethnic group. Both of them got pretty mixed up in the course of time, the Cossacks mating with Tartars or Kirghiz or other Mongoloid peoples, and the American hunters and fur-trappers with Indians, but in the beginning they were simply men flying before dissatisfaction at home—fugitive serfs, bankrupts, criminals, or simply men who were tired of civilization and looking for roominess and adventure of the frontier.

At first this frontier—this *Moskovskaya Ukraina*—lay right at Moscow's door, but it was pushed back until the land still called the Ukraine had no more to do with the frontier than Indiana has to do with Indians. Beyond the Ukraine they came to really new lands where the names they gave indicate the colonialism—New Muscovy (*Novomoskovsk*), and still farther south New Russia (*Novorossiisk*), "as felicitously named," says Leroy-Beaulieu, "as New England."<sup>2</sup> But it was a New England that was an overland and not an overseas extension of the mother country, an extension more like Ohio and Kentucky, eldest daughters of New England and Virginia.

The important point is the colonial character of these lands, a point that Leroy-Beaulieu perfectly understood when he emphasized and re-emphasized that "Russia is a colonial country, a fact which should not for a moment be lost sight of. Russia is a colony one or two centuries old."<sup>3</sup> It was a point that Russia's greatest historian never lost sight of, and which he stressed in the opening pages of his monumental history: "Colonialism is the fundamental fact of Russian history."<sup>4</sup> And it was a characteristic that she shared with the United States and with no other modern power.

The dates of city settlements in New Russia are a striking example of this. Rostov-on-Don was founded in the same decade as Harrodsburg and Boonesboro, first settlements in Kentucky, and Ekaterinoslav within two years of Ohio's Marietta. Nikolaev and Cincinnati were born in the same

<sup>2</sup>Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, *The Empire of the Tsars and the Russians*, translated by Zénaïde Ragozin, New York, 1898, I, 44.

<sup>3</sup>Leroy-Beaulieu, *op. cit.*, I, 50.

<sup>4</sup>V. O. Klyuchevsky, *Kurs russkoi istorii*, I, chapter ii.



year, and Odessa, capital of New Russia, in the year that Ohio entered the Union. Boston and New York and Williamsburg, with their nearly two centuries of existence, are ancient capitals beside these fruits of the wilderness, and the towns of Europe are lost in the mists of prehistoric times.

Colonialism is not to be confused with provincialism, though that was present in Russia and the United States too. But while England is provincial outside of London, and France outside of Paris, the movement of population there has been from the provinces to the centers. In Russia and the United States the population has moved steadily away from the old metropolitan centers—metropolitan in the original Greek sense—and towards the frontiers.<sup>5</sup>

Colonialism tends to develop in a nation an inferiority complex difficult to describe but easy to illustrate. A colonial resident visiting the metropolitan region does so with a corrosive feeling of inferiority, socially and culturally, that may manifest itself in sycophancy before the sophistication of St. Petersburg and Boston, or in a too violent disdain for the things his community lacks. And when the Russian or the American met the older civilization of Europe and the native arrogance of Europeans this inferiority complex became a national characteristic for which the Russians have coined the word *samoöplevanie*—"spitting on oneself." When Catherine Wilmot wrote that eighteenth-century Russia looked to her British eyes like "a clumsy, romping ignorant girl of twelve years old with a fine Parisian cap on her head,"<sup>6</sup> she was saying what hundreds of Europeans have said of both Russia and America, and what Russians and Americans have been inclined to accept as true—as it often was—simply because it came from representatives of older nations. It is exemplified in the eclecticism of New York and St. Petersburg architecture, in the hordes of American tourists who besieged post-war Paris, and in a little sign that is said to have hung at the entrance to the Summer Garden in St. Petersburg: "People in Russian clothes will not be admitted." Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street* and Ivan Goncharov's *Oblomov* are literary examples of this self-analysis and self-castigation, and *samoöplevanie* literary critics in each country hailed them as truthful expositions of national characteristics. It was a feeling that might be carried further and become the sort of complex that inspired Mark Twain to blow out a candle when he was told it had been burning for hundreds of years, and to badger the Italian guide by denying any knowledge of Columbus.

Colonialism manifested itself most noticeably in the newest parts of the country, in the American West and the Russian East. The spanning of Siberia was as rapid as America's march to the Pacific. While the ruins of Kazan were still smoking the Cossacks were on their way eastward, not as

<sup>5</sup>The center of population in the United States, of course, has moved constantly westward; in Russia, excluding the Polish lands where there was no Russian colonization, it has moved southward from Moscow.

<sup>6</sup>*The Russian Journals of Martha and Catherine Wilmot, 1803-1808*, edited by the Marchioness of Londonderry and H. M. Hyde, New York, 1935, I, 23.



soldiers or officials or government representatives, but as free souls like the American pioneers. Later, others went as agents of the Stroganovs, the great merchant family of Russia and Siberia, as some American frontiersmen were trappers for Astor's American Fur Company, but most were independent. Tobolsk, the Siberian Westport, was founded in 1587, Tomsk in 1604, Yeniseisk in 1618, and Yakutsk far up the Lena River, in 1632. Four years later the Cossacks had reached the Sea of Okhotsk and were looking greedily towards Kamchatka and the lands beyond. Strung out behind them for four thousand miles was the line of isolated settlements that would become Siberia's Omahas, Denvers, and Salt Lake Cities of tomorrow.

Behind them, too, lay hecatombs of slaughtered natives, for the Cossack had Jim Bridger's attitude towards the Tunguses, Samoyeds, Yakuts, Kalmycks, Buryats, Chukchees, and dozens of other Mongolian or Mongoloid tribes—good only when dead. And in their wake came the same sort of people who followed the Jim Bridgers of America—more fur-trappers, hunters, gold-seekers, all the types of prospectors or *promyshlenniki* that human society has developed: soldiers to build and defend the forts and keep the roads open; officials to collect taxes and maintain the posting stations and give the barest suggestion of administrative unity to the sprawling empire; and the dispossessed and unhappy from every walk of life.

Among the latter was one element that the American West never had, the unwilling migrants in the convict trains, a steady trickle for hundreds of years that might rise in times of stress to a pouring stream, but which in the total migration to Siberia has received more fame than its numbers justify. Many contemporary Sibiriyaks have convict origins but they no more account for the bulk of the population in Siberia than Oglethorpe's settlers accounted for the bulk of colonial Georgia. Siberia was settled by free peasants or fugitive serfs moving eastward in search of open land as New Englanders moved westward to Kansas. Siberia is still sparsely settled, even by the rather broad standards of European Russia, but then so is Kansas by the standards of Massachusetts.

This sparsity was due in part to government regulation, for migratory peasants were untaxed peasants and the more peasants moved to Siberia the harder the tax problem became. During the 1860's less than ten thousand free colonists crossed the Urals, and it was not until the end of the century and the building of the Trans-Siberian Railway that the stream of pioneers became a torrent.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>See the official report of P. A. Stolypin and A. W. Krivoshein, published after their tour of investigation in Siberia in 1910, and translated into German as *Die Kolonisation Sibiriens*, Berlin, 1912. See also Dmitriev-Mamonov, *Putevoditel po Velikoi Sibirskoi Zheleznoi Dorogi*, St. Petersburg, 1912, and Otto Hoetzsch, "Russisch-Turkestan und die Tendenzen der heutigen russischen Kolonialpolitik," *Schmollers Jahrbuch*, Leipzig, 1913.

These restrictions have received considerable attention from Americans, who have compared them unfavorably with their own free development of the frontier where "the weaklings died on the way and the cowards never started." But some of the strong men died on the way, too, and others returned in despair. The free road of the pioneers did not always lead to Nob Hill or a real-estate fortune, or even to a prosperous old age under one's own western vine and fig tree. During the first half of the 1880's, it is true, covered wagons were pushed joyously across the Mississippi with slogans like "Kansas or bust!" painted on their sides, but the end of the decade saw many of these pioneers heading eastward again with such sorrowful slogans as "In God we trusted and in Kansas we busted!" One scholar estimates that in four years, half the population of western Kansas migrated east again, and he mentions twenty towns left without a single inhabitant—one of them with a \$30,000 opera house and a \$20,000 school house.<sup>8</sup> In 1891 alone, 18,000 covered wagons re-crossed the Missouri River to the Iowa side, fleeing before the collapse of the land-boom. The freeholders who remained were such in name only, for pyramided mortgages had reduced their equities until they were hardly above the status of Russian serfs. Russian restrictions on Siberian migration were certainly injudicious in the extreme, but American encouragement of the westward movement was hardly less injudicious in the other direction.

### III

The vastness of Russia and America has inevitably bred regionalism, but regionalism essentially different from the European type. The only region in Russia comparable to those of France, or Germany, or Great Britain was the Ukraine, where the languages, customs, and traditions made the Ukrainian differ as markedly from the Muscovite as the Scot from the Sassenach or the Catalan from the Castilian. But elsewhere in Russia, and throughout the United States, there were no clearly distinguished regions.

In the United States the popular mind identifies such areas as the "North," the "South," or the "Midwest," but they are largely fictitious divisions. It was the Civil War that emphasized, if it did not actually draw, the line between the two chief zones—the "North," where the culture was essentially New England or New York-Philadelphian; and the "South," where the culture was essentially Virginian or Carolinian. But in the first place these were zones of external colonization.

Each of these centers sent its own cultural pattern along with its colonizers as they moved westward, the New England pattern into Ohio and Illinois and Kansas (where Lawrence's very name marked it an outpost of New

<sup>8</sup>John D. Hicks, *The Populist Revolt*, Minneapolis, 1931, p. 32.

England), and the Virginian into Kentucky and Arkansas and Texas (where the classic white-columned houses are pure Virginian). But while the streams moved westward, there were also cross-currents and eddies, from Ohio and Illinois into Texas, from Tennessee and Arkansas into Kansas, until the two streams were fused into a generalized American pattern that was neither midwestern nor southwestern, New England, nor Virginian. American regions are, in a very real sense, hardly more than geographical expressions, and they express fewer cultural and linguistic differences than are to be found in a hundred-mile trip in Germany or Italy.<sup>9</sup>

The same was true, with one exception, in Russia also, for the only regional differences of the European pattern—aside from the areas which were not Russian at all in their culture—were those between Great and Little Russia, between the Muscovite and Kievan cultural patterns. This was far greater than the differences between New England and Virginia, and in many ways—linguistically, for example—than between America and England. But as these two centers expanded to the east and southeast, different as they were, they tended to fuse into a type that was neither Muscovite nor Ukrainian, though the numerical superiority of the Great Russian made it more like the former than the latter.

In both the United States and Russia, always excepting the Ukraine itself, the differences tended to be fleeting and superficial. Linguistically, it was confined to a few words peculiar to one region or another, a half-dozen vowels lengthened or shortened, and the stress or elision of a consonant or two.

This fusion was a consequence of the rapidity with which the frontier was pushed back. Until the nineteenth century Siberia and the American West—and to a great extent European Russia also—were simply voids to be filled, and they were filled so rapidly and the districts integrated into the fabric of the metropolitan area so soon, that there was no opportunity for regional cultures to develop. The frontier was officially closed in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century and in Russia it was pushed back towards the frigid and torrid zones in Siberia by the penetration of the Trans-Siberian Railroad. But while the frontier lasted, it acted as a zone of Americanization or Russianization, "a melting pot which effected the fusion of divers racial elements and their absorption by the *Russian* element," as a recent writer has phrased it.<sup>10</sup>

There was no place for racial or ethnic pride on the frontier. Muscovites,

<sup>9</sup>This point of view approaches but is not identical with that of Howard W. Odum and Harry Estil Moore in what is now the standard work on the subject, *American Regionalism*, New York, 1938. For the opposite view see F. J. Turner's pioneer study on the importance of sections in American development.

<sup>10</sup>P. Bizilli, "Geopolitical Conditions of the Evolution of Russian Nationality," *Journal of Modern History*, March, 1930, p. 34. This is a brilliant presentation of

Ukrainians, Poles, and Tartars lived contentedly together in Siberia and were assimilated in a Russian pattern as quickly as were the immigrants of German, Italian, or Jewish origin in the American West.<sup>11</sup> As fear of native reprisals gradually died away, the natives were also partially included in the melting pot, the Tunguses and Kamchadals in Siberia and the Indians in Oklahoma. This was an attribute of the frontier as such and had little to do with colonialism, for it was equally true in Caucasia, where the upper classes became thoroughly Russianized, and in southern Texas and Louisiana where the Creole aristocracy lost all but the sentimental attributes of its Spanish, French, or Mexican origins.

The melting pot worked because the bulk of the immigration represented the dominant ethnic strain of the metropolitan areas, Anglo-Saxon in America and Great Russian in Siberia. The others who followed were in a minority and so hopelessly divided that it was easy to accept the ethnic values of the majority. The ease with which this occurred on the frontier and in the colonized areas suggested that its failure in the older parts was due chiefly to the innate obstinacy of the minorities. Archibald Cary Coolidge has remarked: "Many an American who has condemned the iniquity of trying to Russianize the Finns or the Armenians believes as a matter of course that the English language should be imposed as soon as possible on the Puerto Ricans"<sup>12</sup>—or the Filipinos, or the Texas Mexicans.

Siberia, like the American West, was a land of farms where there were no manorial estates, and the aristocracy was represented only by the impermanent army officers or government officials. Everyone had to work together to harvest the crops, or raise the barns, or keep away marauding natives, and in this democratic milieu Peter the Great's Table of Ranks was as irrelevant as John Locke's Grand Model. The Sibiryaks paid no more attention to it than the Carolinians did to the imported caciques and land-graves.

Independence and isolation also instilled a tendency to make and execute one's own laws. "The Yankee farmer and the Russian peasant," John Quincy Adams III once remarked in the course of a diplomatic dinner, "are the only rustic people on earth who are capable of holding town-meetings, and do so instinctively and practically."<sup>13</sup> This was an the colonial, regional, and frontier influences in Russian history, and my own development of colonialism and the frontier in the present article owes a great deal to Professor Bizilli's essay. I cannot wholly agree with him, however, on the importance of regionalism.

<sup>11</sup>Negroes and Orientals were not assimilated in the American West, and were often treated as badly as the natives. Lynchings in America are one of the last elements of frontier psychology, and the lynching area is still in many essentials a frontier area. The frontiersman did nothing by halves. He accepted or rejected with all the violence at his command, which was often considerable.

<sup>12</sup>A. C. Coolidge, *The United States as a World Power*, New York, 1908, p. 43.

<sup>13</sup>*Complimentary Banquet Given by Boston to Rear-Admiral Lessoffsky*, Boston, 1864, p. 49.

overstatement and does more credit to Mr. Adams' courtesy than to his knowledge, for originally the Yankee town-meeting and the Russian *mir* were probably products of the frontier, and rustic people have always tended to develop such institutions instinctively and practically when they lived on the frontier.<sup>14</sup>

Neither the town-meeting nor the *mir* reached full maturity in the colonized regions, for the national governments arrived before there was any opportunity for such local institutions to develop very far, but their elementary forms were present in the rough, drumhead justice prevalent on the two frontiers. Acts harmful to the community or to a member of the community were punished with speed and dispatch by the community as a whole or by the individual member, and the evildoer would be dead and buried and the earth above his grave smoothed nonchalantly down before a policeman could get from St. Louis or Irkutsk.

The frontier was not peculiar to Russia and the United States, for it has played an enormous rôle in the development of most countries. Much of the European Middle Ages can be understood only by reference to the frontier conditions that prevailed. But its rôle in the development of Russia and the United States is of greater importance than elsewhere, partly because emergence from the frontier period has been so recent and partly because the frontier extended over such a vast area. Its rôle was not even realized until it had all but disappeared, and it is no accident that in both countries the first suggestion of its importance in the national development came from men who were themselves resident in communities which were frontier still or but recently emerged from it. Turner in Wisconsin and Shchapov in Siberia saw the issue because they "looked from the periphery rather than the center."

#### IV

Looked at from Washington or St. Petersburg, the mere task of traversing so much territory, even without native tribes to bar the way, was a task of appalling dimensions. The task of civilizing and integrating it into a unified nation was a job that staggered the imagination. Henry Adams found the America of the 'sixties crude in comparison with England and France, but looking back on it after forty years he was amazed that it had been no cruder than it was, and he realized that there had been more important things to do than import a few pictures or bric-a-brac.

"Doubtless the country needed ornament—needed it very badly indeed—

<sup>14</sup>See Paul Vinogradoff, "Village Communities," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th ed. The Yankee town-meeting and the Russian *mir* were, of course, utterly different in most ways, and both survived long after the frontier period for reasons not always connected with their original purposes. On the *mir* see D. Mackenzie Wallace's *Russia*, New York, 1877, chapters viii, ix; or Leroy-Beaulieu, *op. cit.*, I, Book VIII.



but it needed energy still more, and capital most of all, for its supply was ridiculously out of proportion to its wants. On the new scale of power, merely to make the continent habitable for civilized people would require an immediate outlay of money that would have bankrupted the world. As yet, no portion of the world except a few narrow stretches of western Europe had ever been tolerably provided with the essentials of comfort and convenience; to fit out an entire continent with roads and the decencies of life would exhaust the credit of the entire planet."<sup>15</sup>

And vast as America was, Siberia was vaster. Rude and uncivilized as the West was, the Russian East was ruder and more uncivilized, with a harsher climate and more rigorous demands on humanity. America was so big that two-and-seventy warring sects could set up Utopias from New Harmony to the Great Salt Lake and not interfere with each other or with the conservatives, so big that communities could be mislaid and forgotten for years. In Siberia a community could get mislaid for three centuries. April 19, 1931, *The New York Herald Tribune* reported the finding of a village of five hundred souls on the Indigirka River in northern Siberia whose ancestors had been dropped off there by the *promyshlenniki* in the reign of Ivan the Terrible. In the confusion of the civil wars that followed, they were lost sight of and forgotten, and when the inquisitive archæologists turned them up once more, they were speaking a language that no living Russian had ever heard and that had been seen only in old documents and literary histories, as strange to twentieth-century ears as the Elizabethan dialects spoken in the Appalachian highlands.

But vast as the areas were, they were conquered and, in part at least, civilized. In Henry Adams' day the pony express was already carrying American goods, American news, American ideals to the outermost parts of the land, and in Siberia the Imperial Russian Post linked the scattered settlements from the Urals to the Amur. "From the southern end of the peninsula of Kamchatka to the most remote village in Finland, from the frozen, windswept shores of the Arctic Ocean to the hot, sandy deserts of Central Asia, the whole empire is one vast network of post routes," wrote George Kennan in the 'sixties. "You may pack your portmanteau in Nizhni-Novgorod, get a *podorozhnaya* from the postal department, and start for Petropavlovsk seven thousand miles away with the full assurance that there will be horses, reindeer, or dogs ready and waiting to carry you on, night and day, to your destination."<sup>16</sup>

When the pony express gave way to the railroad, the development came more rapidly. In 1903, when Albert Beveridge visited Irkutsk, he found a thriving city with its own museum, a first-class theater producing plays with excellent casts, and a fine opera house built with money raised in one

<sup>15</sup>*The Education of Henry Adams*, Boston, 1927, pp. 238-239.

<sup>16</sup>George Kennan, *Tent Life in Siberia*, New York, 1869, p. 262.



week by public subscription.<sup>17</sup> Siberia had gotten its first things first. Now it was getting its ornaments.

Illimitable space has been the birthright of Russians and Americans and it has colored their lives and their ways of thinking. In Old Russia a word was often heard on the lips of her people that expressed this feeling—*prostor*. It is a word not easily translated, for there are other words for "distance" or "vastness" as such. *Prostor* is illimitable distance, vastness beyond statistical measurement, mile upon mile of rolling plain and steppe that flows away into the distance as far as the eye can see. When the Russian tried to describe *prostor* for a foreigner he could only throw out his arms, a gesture he always used when he thought of *prostor*. When he was called to serve in the Caucasus amid the breath-taking beauties of lofty mountains and towering peaks, he grew homesick for the flat and level plains of Tula or Kaluga. "One can't *see* anything in the mountains," he would complain.

Americans have no word for it, but westerners have the feeling itself, and they have also the same characteristic gesture of throwing their arms wide when they think of it. The plainsman's feelings when he finds himself in the narrow, crooked, winding streets of the old seaboard cities would be perfectly understood by a Russian. Down every street a dead-end of stifling walls, on every side crowded buildings—nowhere to turn, no *prostor*.

Americans and Russians have had a certain love of vastness for its own sake. When the Russians built their railroads they insisted that the tracks must have a wider gauge than elsewhere—"Russia is so much bigger," they explained to the harassed engineers. It is exemplified in the reports of Russian resources, for great as they are, they never quite equal the optimism of the official statistics. It is exemplified in America's constant reference to her inexhaustible supplies and her boundless wealth, in her tall tales of the frontier, in the sagas of Paul Bunyan, and the magnificent lies of Mark Twain. When Twain was travelling in Russia he got into a discussion with Baron Ungern-Sternberg, the Minister of Railways, who all but overwhelmed him with statistics. At one point, the minister said there were ten thousand convicts working on railway gradings and right-of-ways, at which point the American sized him up for a minute and then blandly replied that in the United States there were *eighty thousand* convicts working on the railways, and that every one was under sentence of death for first-degree murder! "That closed *him* out," he said happily.<sup>18</sup>

Mark Twain felt right at home in Russia, and he reported that the people were not only like home-folks, but even the towns had a familiar look until he came to the Russian church.<sup>19</sup> St. Petersburg delighted him

<sup>17</sup>A. J. Beveridge, *The Russian Advance*, New York, 1903, pp. 224-225.

<sup>18</sup>Samuel L. Clemens, *Innocents Abroad*, New York, 1911, II, 118.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 101.

as a model of what a city should be, and its wide streets and spacious squares appealed to his midwestern heart. Here there was space to breathe.

Other Americans have also been struck with the outward resemblances between Russian and American towns, and particularly between the towns of Siberia and the West. Among many others, Senator Beveridge, who said Siberia was like the Kansas he had seen in the 'eighties "with all its rawness and newness," and William Boyce Thompson, who wrote to an American friend that he was vividly reminded of the West he had known as a boy. Ivan Golovin said he disliked Switzerland very much because of its "colossal grandeur," but that America was more to his liking because he could see so far in all directions.<sup>20</sup>

The resemblance was no accident, for the towns of Siberia and the West were in the zones of internal colonization, where there was no need to encompass them with fortifications or pack the citizens in a restricted area. There was more land than anything else, and the houses could sprawl contentedly across the plain. The national capitals were themselves of the same type, both laid out on an enormous scale, both deliberately founded as the capitals of great nations. And both of them, at first, only grandiose and somewhat ridiculous hopes for the future.

This common passion for vast concepts has influenced their national policies, and to it can be traced the most characteristic political expressions of both countries. Russia and America were big, each was a world within itself, and each thought of itself in hemispheric terms. No other nation has ever developed theories of splendid isolation quite like the Monroe Doctrine or Slavophilism, or global notions quite like Pan-Americanism and Pan-Slavism.<sup>21</sup>

"The Monroe Doctrine had its philosophical roots in a notion that there was a difference between the American and European sphere," writes Henry Steele Commager, "between the New World young, buoyant, healthy, moral, and the Old decadent and depraved."<sup>22</sup> And Slavophilism was based on a belief in the uniqueness of the Slavic culture, the universality of Russia, and a similar feeling that between the Russian and the European there was a gap that could not and should not be bridged. Leroy-Beaulieu called Slavophilism "one of the most curious phenomena of Russian life in the nineteenth century," and added wonderingly, that while the number of self-admitted Slavophiles was small and mostly regarded as cranks, "one not un-

<sup>20</sup>Cf. Beveridge, *The Russian Advance*, 1903, pp. 224-225; Hermann Hagedorn, *The Magnate: William Boyce Thompson and His Times*, New York, 1935, p. 52; Ivan Golovin, *The Stars and Stripes*, New York, 1856, p. 52.

<sup>21</sup>Cf. the penetrating comments on Pan-Slavism and the Monroe Doctrine in Robert Binkley's brilliant analysis of nineteenth-century trends, *Realism and Nationalism*, New York, 1935, pp. 28-29; 136 and 230.

<sup>22</sup>From a review in the *New York Herald Tribune Books*, April 20, 1941, of a history of the Monroe Doctrine by Dexter Perkins, *Hands off!* New York, 1941.

frequently stumbles on some Slavophile dogma or superstition among people of the world, or writers who make it a point to have nothing to do with such idolatry."<sup>28</sup>

There are few self-admitted isolationists or "hundred-per cent" Americans and most of these are on the lunatic fringe, but one not infrequently finds, among worldly people or among writers, a steady belief in Anglo-Saxon uniqueness, in the United States' special position in the world, and in a moral heritage peculiarly American. No wonder a Frenchman like Leroy-Beaulieu or an Englishman like George Curzon neither understood nor very much liked them. Even in their milder aspects these notions seem to the European like "nationalism gone mad," in the expressive phrase of William L. Langer—but the Hawley-Smoot tariff bill was not put over, nor participation in the League of Nations wrecked, solely by a little group of willful men divorced from the currents of American life, however blind they may have been to external reality.

Pan-Slavism and Pan-Americanism are by no means the same things as Slavophilism or "hundred-per cent" Americanism, though they stem from the same roots, nor are they just a more polite way of saying Pan-Russianism or Pan-United-States-ism, though these things, too, they have often tended to be in practise.

It is not easy to say precisely what they are in all of their protean manifestations, but they have more in common than a Greek prefix. Their origins lie deep in the minds and hearts of two space-loving people. They are expressions of the idea that here are worlds so rich and so inexhaustible in their own resources that they can prosper without other lands or other cultures; lands so vast and so varied that either of them is to all other lands as one world to another. It may be called Americanism, or Slavophilism, or Pan-something-or-other-ism. It may be called anything you like, but it is really Russian *prostor*.

<sup>28</sup>Leroy-Beaulieu, *The Empire of the Tsars and the Russians*, I, 228.

# The Church in the Soviet Union

## 1917 - 1941

BY N. S. TIMASHEFF

**I**N 1917 the Communists gained power over Russia. For more than nine centuries Russia had been a nation for which Christianity, in its Greek Orthodox form, was one of the fundamental principles of life. A basic doctrine of Communism is its militant atheism, which does not concede to any religion the right to exist. Thus two faiths became opposed to each other.<sup>1</sup>

As Communism was the aggressor, the conflict assumed the form of religious persecution. The methods of this persecution have varied greatly: a number of plans have been successively elaborated by the rulers of Russia, who have constantly fluctuated between the hope of exterminating religion by a patient siege or by direct attack.

The original plan was derived from the fundamental Marxist conception of religion, according to which religion is maintained by the upper classes because it assists them in oppressing and exploiting the proletariat. Hence the idea that the Church, deprived of the support which it had enjoyed in Imperial Russia, would crumble away of itself. This idea was carried out by the decree of January 23, 1918, separating Church and State and secularizing education.<sup>2</sup> To a certain extent, this decree was patterned on the well-known French laws of the years 1905-1906, but actually it went much further. Dispossessing the Church was the first element of the plan. "No church or religious society has the right to own property; such societies do not enjoy the right of a juridical person," reads Article 12 of the 1918 decree. It is easy to understand the difficulty of organizing the material basis of church life when neither the parishes, nor the dioceses, nor the national Church might possess anything. All church property had to become the property of the individuals who acted as trustees of the Church.

<sup>1</sup>Communism as a new faith has been described by E. R. Embree in his "Rebirth of Religion in Russia," *International Journal of Ethics*, XLV, 422-30. The author obviously exaggerates the degree of acceptance of the Communist faith in Russia.

<sup>2</sup>For a complete analysis of this decree, cf. N. S. Timasheff, "Staat und Kirche," in a symposium, *Das Recht Sowjetrusslands*, Tübingen, 1925; and V. Gsovsky, "The Legal Status of the Church in Soviet Russia," *Fordham Law Review*, January, 1939.

The second element of the plan concerned itself with the reduction of priests and other ministers to a state of social inferiority. Article 65 of the Constitution of July 10, 1918, proclaimed them to be non-workers and servants of the bourgeoisie, and together with the latter they were deprived of the franchise. When ration cards were introduced, they, as a rule, received no cards at all. They were not allowed to become members of trade-unions, and this prevented them from earning money to supplement the meager sums which their parishioners could give them; they had to pay higher rents for their living quarters, as well as a high income tax, and their children were deprived of the right to be educated in secondary schools and universities.

The third element of the plan involved the destruction of the influence of the Church on the younger generation. The teaching of religion was prohibited in state, public and private schools by Article 9 of the decree of January 23, 1918. On June 13, 1921, the teaching of religion to private groups of more than three children was also prohibited. Thus for many years, education became non-religious, based upon strictly materialistic conceptions of natural and social processes.

Even during this first period, the local authorities, encountering the unexpected passive resistance of the people, applied more drastic measures, such as executing bishops and priests, imprisoning or exiling them, closing churches by force, and desecrating the objects of religious veneration. However, these measures were sporadic, and the central authorities continued to profess the idea that direct religious persecution was not conducive to any good. Then, in March 1921, with the introduction of the New Economic Policy, came a partial restoration of capitalistic methods of production and exchange. As a counterpart, "the ideological front" was to be subjected to increased pressure, largely in the form of a direct attack on religion, especially on the Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches.<sup>3</sup>

An acute situation was intentionally created by the decree of February 26, 1922, ordering the churches to surrender all articles of gold, silver, and precious stones under the pretext of helping the starving population of the eastern part of Russia. Patriarch Tikhon, head of the Russian Orthodox Church, replied with the message of February 28, in which he declared that it was canonically impossible to give away sacred objects (vessels). The government insisted, and ordered the removal of sacred vessels despite offers of believers to pay for the value of the objects in question. In order to overcome opposition, many clergymen and laymen were brought to trial. Forty-five executions have been reported, among them that of

<sup>3</sup>The earlier persecutions have been frequently described: cf. F. McCullagh, *The Bolshevik Persecution of Christianity*, New York, 1924; A. A. Valentinov, *The Assault of Heaven*, New York, 1925; M. Spinka, *The Church and the Russian Revolution*, New York, 1927; W. C. Emhardt, *Religion in Soviet Russia*, London, 1929.



the Metropolitan Benjamin of Petrograd.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, an attempt was made to create a schism within the Greek Orthodox Church itself. Some bishops and priests did not approve of the policy of Patriarch Tikhon. On May 12, 1922, they met in council, at which they declared the Patriarch unfit for further duty, announced the creation of a new religious organization under the name of "The Living Church," expressed their hope of an agreement with the Communist government, and outlined plans for far-reaching changes in the Orthodox Church. The Communist government decided to support the new movement. The Patriarch was arrested. The Living Church was allowed to convoke an All-Russian Council, although this had been denied the Orthodox Church. Many church buildings were forcibly turned over to the Living Church, which became the legal Church of an atheist state.

This situation, however, was short-lived. The laymen did not follow the movement, and the Living Church, though headed by several bishops and priests, remained without flock; its churches stood empty, and nobody was interested in the proceedings and resolutions of its Council. Then the new Church broke up into several factions which began to struggle against one another.

On June 19, 1923, the earlier status of the Orthodox Church was restored by a decree which forbade local authorities to support certain religious groups against others. The Patriarch was released from prison on June 27, 1923. Most of the rebels among the clergy performed an act of penance and were pardoned by the head of the Russian Church. Until his death on April 7, 1925, the Patriarch exercised his authority and enjoyed the love of his faithful flock.

The events of June, 1923, signified the breakdown of the first direct attack against religion. The Communist government, having realized that the authority of the Church was still very great, despite the period of acute persecution, prohibited the election of a new Patriarch. The acting Patriarchs who followed were successively imprisoned until 1927, when the last of them, Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhni-Novgorod, was able to negotiate a compromise with the Communist government and thus retain his position.<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile, an organization was founded on February 7, 1925, which was to play an important part throughout the years to come. It was the League of Militant Atheists, whose primary function was to undermine faith by means of desecration, i.e., by organizing anti-religious processions,

<sup>4</sup>J. F. Hecker, *Religion and Communism*, New York, 1933, p. 209.

<sup>5</sup>On August 19, 1927, Metropolitan Sergius made the following declaration: "I have taken upon myself, in the name of the whole of our Orthodox Church, hierarchy and flock, to express to the Soviet authorities our sincere readiness to be fully law-abiding citizens of the Soviet Union, loyal to its government, and definitely to hold ourselves aloof from all political parties or enterprises seeking to harm the Union."



carnivals, and other performances on church holidays, especially in the vicinity of church buildings.

However, the failure of these methods to destroy religion was so obvious that in 1929-30 the government inaugurated a new policy. The policy consisted of a renewal of direct attack combined with an entirely new method, which might be termed "cultural strangulation."

This time, the direct attack assumed the form of mass closing of churches, under the pretext that Russia was being transformed into a socialist society, and that socialism and religion were incompatible. In the course of a few months thousands of churches were closed, both in the cities and in the countryside, but particularly in the districts where wholesale collectivization was being introduced. Moreover, a campaign was started for the burning of ikons and for the removal of church bells. A six-day week was introduced by a decree of September 24, 1929, making it difficult for workers to attend church on Sunday, unless Sunday happened to coincide with the sixth, or rest day, of the new week.<sup>6</sup>

At the same time, the Church was to be deprived of much of its spiritual influence. Clause 17 of the decree of April 8, 1929,<sup>7</sup> forbade religious societies, i.e., parishes, to form mutual aid associations and cooperatives, and to use their property for other than religious needs. They were also forbidden to give material aid to their members; to organize special prayers or other meetings for children, young people, and women, as well as Bible classes; to do literary work and handwork; to organize groups or meetings of workers or others, as well as excursions; to open playgrounds, libraries, and reading rooms; to operate sanatoria and to offer medical aid. In addition, a constitutional amendment was put into effect on May 28, 1929, abolishing free competition between religious thought and anti-religious propaganda which had heretofore existed, though more in word than in fact.

The relegation of all active lay members of the Church to a plane of social inferiority was also part of the new plan. This policy was not given overt expression in any law or decree; but the study of Soviet papers shows that for years no opportunity was given to faithful Christians for advancement either in the administration or in professional careers, which are all the more important because private enterprise is not permitted in the Soviet Union.

Finally, anti-religious education was substituted for the non-religious

<sup>6</sup>The persecutions of 1929-30 and subsequent events have been frequently dealt with. For instance, see S. and B. Webb, *Soviet Communism*, London, 1935, pp. 996-1016; W. H. Chamberlin, *Russia's Iron Age*, London, 1936; A. Rhys Williams, *The Soviets*, New York, 1937, pp. 319-335. These works do not cover the period studied in the latter part of this paper.

<sup>7</sup>For a more complete analysis of this decree, cf. Gsovsky, "The Legal Status of the Church . . ."

education of the earlier years. The change was announced at the same session of the Congress of the Soviets which voted the previously mentioned constitutional reform.<sup>8</sup> Textbooks were introduced in schools showing the incompatibility of science and religion and the class roots of religious ideas. Sociology based upon the materialistic and atheistic doctrines of Marx and Lenin became one of the most important subjects in the school curriculum. All teachers were compelled to use every opportunity to help pupils to become convinced atheists. In order to further restrict the influence of religion on youth, the decree of April 8, 1929, abolished the right to teach religion to groups of fewer than four children—a right which had existed until that time. Thus the teaching of religion was confined to the parents.

The first part of the 1929–30 plan, the direct attack, once more proved to be a failure. Peasants resisted collectivization not only because they did not want to lose their economic freedom, but also because it was combined with the closing of their churches. Therefore, in order to lessen the tension, a decree was issued on March 15, 1930, acknowledging that by closing the churches the local authorities had proceeded against the true will of the people; this was now forbidden.<sup>9</sup> A few days later, the Central Committee of the League of Militant Atheists also recognized that both central and local authorities had gone too far in their attempts to exterminate religion by force.<sup>10</sup>

The second component of the 1929–30 plan, cultural strangulation, was systematically carried out up to the years 1934–35. Then began a new period, characterized by a number of small concessions on the part of the government, not because their attitude towards religion had changed, but as part of the general policy of adjustment to the desires of the people, a policy which cannot be explained otherwise than by the government's need to come to terms with the nation at a time when there were serious threats of war in the East and West. Anti-Easter and Anti-Christmas carnivals were gradually discontinued. The sale of special products needed for the preparation of the traditional Easter cakes and meats was permitted first in private markets and later in the stores of the Soviet state. In 1935 the population once more had the joy of lighting their Christmas trees, which had been strictly forbidden for many years. A decree of December 29, 1935, authorized the children of the clergy to enroll in any school, and

<sup>8</sup>About that time Lunacharsky, the People's Commissar for Education, wrote as follows: "The believing teacher in the Soviet school is an awkward contradiction, and departments of popular education are bound to use every opportunity to replace such teachers with new ones, of anti-religious sentiments." *Pravda*, March 26, 1929.

<sup>9</sup>It is probable that consideration for the Christian Protest Movement which had gained momentum about that time in England also influenced the decision of the Communist leaders.

<sup>10</sup>*Antireligioznik*, 1930, No. 4.

the Constitution of December 5, 1936, abolished the disfranchisement of priests with that of all other "non-workers."<sup>11</sup>

In August, 1937, there occurred a sudden reversal of this policy, and a third direct attack against the Church was launched. This attack was caused by the enactment of the new constitution, although officially this constitution was proclaimed to be the most democratic in the world. The leaders of the Church once more became implacable enemies of the social reconstruction, whereas the rank and file of the believers were assumed to be honest and loyal members of the socialist society:<sup>12</sup> a significant difference from the previous attacks.

As a result, a number of bishops and priests were arrested and tried "for conspiracy to overthrow the Soviet régime," or for "concrete hostile acts," such as setting fire to factories; sometimes priests were accused of stealing church property or of immoral conduct. Numerous decrees were issued to combat religious practice which had evolved as a result of the anti-religious policy of the government. An even greater number of churches than in 1929-30 was closed; about 10,000 out of the 30,000 Orthodox parishes which had existed before the renewal of persecutions in 1937-38 were abolished, only to be replaced, it is true, by an equal number of "unregistered," i.e., secret and illegal organizations.<sup>13</sup>

The third wave of acute persecution ended as suddenly as it had begun. January, 1939, marks the introduction of what may be called the new religious policy. The régime being an "ideocracy," or the rule of a doctrine, a theoretical foundation for the new attitude had to be found. The Historical Institute of the Academy of Sciences and of the Central Committee of the League of Militant Atheists held a joint session, during which a paper by Professor Ranovich was discussed. Ranovich recognized that Christianity had played an important part in the struggle against slavery: that it had proclaimed the equality of man, regardless of race and social status; that it had introduced a revolutionary and democratic spirit into human relations. These propositions were accepted by the joint session.<sup>14</sup> A little later, the League of Militant Atheists acknowledged that the teaching of the Gospel concerning the love for one's neighbor was accepted by all the workers of the world.<sup>15</sup> It was also said, at the time, that Stalin had become a revolutionist because, at the Tiflis seminary where he studied, he was shocked by the fact that millions of men were not permitted to believe

<sup>11</sup>Cf. N. S. Timasheff, "Religion in Soviet Russia," *Thought*, March, 1940, pp. 108-109.

<sup>12</sup>About this time, Yaroslavsky stated that nearly one-third of the adult urban population and two-thirds of the rural population continued to believe in God. *Ob antireligioznoi propagande*, Moscow, 1937.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. N. S. Timasheff, "Religion in Soviet Russia," *Thought*, March, 1940.

<sup>14</sup>*Antireligioznik*, 1939, No. 1.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, 1939, No. 4.

as they wished.<sup>16</sup> Lenin and Stalin, it was explained on another occasion, always rebuked those Communists who considered that struggle against religion was necessary in all circumstances; this struggle had to be subordinated to consideration of general policy, and in 1939 such considerations forced the Soviet government to permit citizens to profess any religion and not to discriminate on religious grounds. The principle of tolerance, it was asserted, was especially important in regard to those national and religious groups which previously had been subjected to religious persecutions.<sup>17</sup>

All these theoretical statements were necessary in order to introduce and to re-enforce the new instructions of the Communist government concerning the new religious policy. These instructions were first issued in January, 1938. It was admitted that the enforcement of the anti-religious policy, at about the time of the elections to the Supreme Soviet, had been overdone. Anti-religious propaganda was to be coordinated with the class struggle; consequently, the activity of the League of Militant Atheists had to be subordinated to other, more acute political problems. All attempts to liquidate religion at once were to be stopped.<sup>18</sup> Subsequently it was decreed in a more general form that every attempt to combat religion by administrative measures, especially by the closing of churches, was to be discontinued. Atheists were to be careful to avoid jarring the religious sentiments of the believers. The League of Militant Atheists was entrusted with the task of checking attempts to suppress religion by administrative measures.<sup>19</sup>

In 1940 additional instructions were published by the Central Committee of the Communist Party. "The League of Militant Atheists," the instructions read, "has acted on the premise that religion derived its power from the ignorance of the masses and from their betrayal. This meant repeating the obvious mistake of the bourgeois atheists and certainly was incompatible with the doctrine of Lenin and Stalin, who always stressed that religion was rooted in social conditions. If people are satisfied with their life on earth, they have no reason to implore the help of Heaven. The fact that many people in the U.S.S.R. continue to pray, means that they are dissatisfied with the material and moral conditions of their existence. That is the point around which the activity of the League should be concentrated; the League should explain to the workers that their position is very satisfactory."<sup>20</sup>

A number of small concessions were made. The restoration of old ikons was permitted, and oil for burning in lamps before the ikons was again sold in the pharmacies. The custom of giving children Christian names ceased

<sup>16</sup>*Bezbozhnik*, 1939, No. 6.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 1939, No. 3.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, 1939, No. 12.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 1939, No. 8.

<sup>20</sup>*Pravda*, March 20, 1940.

to be combated "because many revolutionists had such names."<sup>21</sup> Very significant is the fact that when, under the pressure of circumstances, the Soviet government abandoned the six-day week and returned to the usual week, Sunday was made the rest day.<sup>22</sup> When this decree was about to be issued, the leaders of the League of Militant Atheists protested and suggested that Monday or Wednesday take the place of Sunday. Nevertheless, their protest was disregarded, and Professor Nikolsky was commissioned to write an article for the official paper of the League explaining that no other day would ever be convenient as a holiday, since the majority of the nation, i.e., people living in the villages, persisted in observing Sunday, and that a discrepancy in this matter between country and towns would be unthinkable.<sup>23</sup>

The new religious policy has been tested by the new situations which arose after its enactment. After the deal with Hitler, Mikhailov, the head of the Young Communist League, explained that both states, the Soviet and the Nazi, opposed the Christian ideology and that the Catholic clergy was their foremost common enemy. Therefore, the two governments were constrained to exchange information, and to some extent to act jointly, especially after the partition of Poland. However, this cooperation was limited. The Communist party fought religion because of its materialistic doctrine, but not because of the race principle, which for them was unacceptable. Moreover, the Soviet government could not follow the Nazi government's policy concerning the Orthodox Church in Poland, for the Communist government was acting in absolute conformity with the Stalin Constitution: religious worship was free so long as religious organizations recognized the definitive character of the new order in Russia and abandoned all opposition to it.<sup>24</sup>

The Soviet policy in the newly annexed provinces has been very symptomatic of the present attitude of the Soviet government in regard to religion, and this despite the fact that the Soviet conquest has been short-lived. On February 5, 1940, *Izvestiya* mentioned "counter-revolutionary rumors concerning coming religious persecutions in Western White Russia and Western Ukraine," rumors which had influenced a number of workers who were not class conscious. Actually no anti-religious measures were contemplated, and therefore party leaders were able to deny such rumors and to disseminate correct information among the local inhabitants. A few days later, the head of the League of Militant Atheists officially declared that no branches of the League would be created in the newly annexed provinces,

<sup>21</sup>For further details, cf. N. S. Timasheff, "Religion in Soviet Russia," *Thought*, March, 1940.

<sup>22</sup>Decree of June 26, 1940.

<sup>23</sup>*The Tablet*, London, February 15, 1941.

<sup>24</sup>*Posledniya Novosti*, January 21, 1940. The Soviet papers comprising the reports quoted there are unavailable.



and this despite the great authority of the clergy in these provinces. The chief task of the day, according to him, was to uproot the numerous lies of the enemies of the Soviet government. The anti-religious activity in these provinces was to be limited to the organization of conferences and to the education of the masses.<sup>25</sup>

On August 21, 1940, a decree on agrarian reform was enacted in Lithuania, according to which every parish priest was to be granted 3 ha. (8.1 acres) arable land, even if previously his parish had not possessed any land. Furthermore, priests who had previously owned land, were to retain up to 30 ha. (81 acres), the same acreage as that allowed the peasants.<sup>26</sup>

In this connection, the following statement made by Cardinal Hlond of Poland is of interest:

The policy adopted [by Bolsheviks in Eastern Poland] is to avoid massacres and other barbaric methods in favor of others, more subtle and efficient, already tested by experience. As a consequence, the Russians seek to undermine the importance of the Church, to degrade the clergy and, above all, to educate the youth to atheism and communism. For this reason there are no organized massacres of priests. The few cases so far recorded were due to local Communists. To impoverish the clergy, the Commissariat of Internal Affairs confiscated all Church property and deprived priests of their revenue, forcing them to beg for their living. At the same time, it disorganized dioceses and forbade bishops to attend to their administration and to visit the parishes. The propaganda for atheism is done through slogans coming from Moscow. It is not so gross as in the early days of the Soviet regime. Atheism is preached scientifically. Repugnant blasphemy has been replaced by skillful skepticism, which is instilled especially into the children. The banning of religion from schools is applied gradually. The cross is, in some cases, permitted to remain in school rooms, but it must be placed between portraits of Stalin and Lenin.<sup>27</sup>

This information shows that, in the newly annexed provinces, the policy of the Soviet government was that of "coordination," or of their gradual adjustment to the conditions prevailing in the country since the enactment of the new religious policy. This information also shows that the extent of the change effected by this policy should not be exaggerated. The government has not been converted and continues to consider atheism as the official state doctrine. The church organization is still prevented from exercising its functions. Anti-religious education continues to dominate. However, direct persecution and, perhaps, unconditional discrimination against all believers have stopped.

This interpretation may be corroborated by numerous statements which

<sup>25</sup>*Bezbozhnik*, 1940, No. 4.

<sup>26</sup>I. P. Trainin, "Konstitutsii novykh sovetskikh respublik," *Vestnik Akademii Nauk*, 1940, Nos. 10-12.

<sup>27</sup>*New York Times*, March 17, 1940.

have appeared in the Soviet papers. In the summer of 1939, *Pravda* issued an energetic reminder of the necessity for combating religion: "Many still adhere to the rites and superstitions of the old Church, continuing to believe in religious doctrines, the power of charms, sorcery, and the interpretation of dreams. The existence of such religious ideology offers a fruitful field for the activity of the enemies of the people, especially among the peasantry."<sup>28</sup>

On April 25, 1940, complaints of the unsatisfactory organization of anti-religious propaganda in the schools were voiced at a meeting of the presidium of the League of Militant Atheists. Yaroslavsky, head of the League, said that anti-religious work in the schools was being badly carried out by the agencies of public education. A special committee for developing anti-religious work among school children was established.<sup>29</sup>

On May 9, 1940, *Pravda* joined the campaign for the opening of more anti-religious propaganda schools. It complained that many schools frequently resumed their anti-religious work only when Easter and Christmas approached.

After the annexation of the Baltic States, Yaroslavsky discussed the prospects of atheism in these newly acquired areas:

Since twenty-two years have not been enough to liquidate the Church in the U.S.S.R., we shall have many difficulties in extirpating the remains of religious prejudices in the Baltic countries. One of the reasons is that many people consider anti-religious propaganda no longer necessary. This opinion is false. Anti-religious propaganda is one of the essential aspects of Communist propaganda and must be carried out by a special organization.<sup>30</sup>

The partial compromise with religion may be explained, first, in terms of the general trend of cultural life in Russia during the past few years. Because the efforts to introduce a new, purely proletarian culture had failed, the Communist government had attempted to impose on Russia a mixture of the old national culture and Marxism, the latter replacing the Christian elements of the former. This proved to be impossible. Essential parts in culture complexes cannot be artificially interchanged. Within the general trend, religion formed a "lag" of major importance, for Russian culture is more deeply rooted in religion than the culture of any other modern nation. Consequently, either an interruption of the general restorative trend or its extension to religion had to follow. Events of the last few years show that the latter alternative has been chosen—for the time being.

This choice may be explained by the increasing danger implied in the international situation. The new religious policy is mainly a result of this danger. Throughout the years 1939-41, the Communist government has

<sup>28</sup>*Pravda*, August 20, 1939.

<sup>30</sup>*Bezbozhnik*, 1940, No. 24.

<sup>29</sup>*New York Times*, April 26, 1940.

been under the pressure of the anticipated conflict with Germany. When the Russo-German war broke out, the government attempted a further conciliation with religion. It gave great publicity to the message of Acting Patriarch Sergius ordering prayer and patriotic endeavor to defeat "the enemy of Russia and humanity."<sup>31</sup> On August 21, 1941, the Moscow radio called upon "all God-loving inhabitants of the occupied countries" to rise in defense of their religious freedom and charged the German régime with menacing the very existence of Christianity.<sup>32</sup> A month later, the *Bezbozhnik*, a weekly publication of the League of Militant Atheists, was discontinued, and a few days later the *Antireligioznik*, the League's monthly, leaving the League almost without means of propaganda.<sup>33</sup>

The interconnections of these events is only too obvious. The government has not been converted, even to the doctrine of religious tolerance, but has merely accepted, for cogent reasons, a compromise policy contrary to its convictions. Hence the precarious character of the concessions in the realm of religion. If the situation once more changes to the advantage of the Communist government, a return to the policy of direct attack against religion may be expected, perhaps in combination with a general pressure along the whole "ideological front."<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup>*New York Times*, June 30, 1941.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, August 22, 1941.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, October 1 and 7, 1941.

<sup>34</sup>*L'Osservatore Romano* commented on the situation as follows: "It is undeniable that anti-religious thought and propaganda have been put aside, folded up, and laid away like garments in a wardrobe for another season. It is also undeniable . . . that at the first appearance of the rainbow this conspiracy [against religion] grows up like a weed amid grain in the spring." (Quoted, with reference to the Associated Press, by the *Christian Science Monitor*, August 2, 1941.)

# The Lermontov Mirage

BY VLADIMIR NABOKOV

**M**ICHAEL LERMONTOV was born when Pushkin was a lad of fifteen and he died four years after Pushkin's death, that is, at the quite ridiculous age of twenty-seven.<sup>1</sup> Like Pushkin he was killed in a duel, but his duel was not the inevitable sequel of a tangled tragedy as in Pushkin's case. It belonged rather to that trivial type which in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries so often turned hot friendship into cold murder—a phenomenon of temperature rather than of ethics.

You must imagine him as a sturdy, shortish, rather shabby-looking Russian army officer with a singularly pale and smooth forehead, queer velvety eyes that "seemed to absorb light instead of emitting it," and a jerky manner in his demeanor and speech. Following both a Byronic fashion and his own disposition, he took pleasure in offending people, but there can hardly be any doubt that the bully in him was the shell and not the core, and that in many cases his attitude was that of a morbidly self-conscious, tender-hearted, somewhat childish young man building himself a sentiment-proof defense. He spent the best years of his short life in the Caucasus, taking part in dangerous expeditions against mountain tribes that kept rebelling against imperial domination. Finally, a quarrel with a fellow-officer, whom he had most methodically annoyed, put a stop to his not very happy life.

But all this is neither here nor there. What matters is that this very young, arrogant, not overeducated man, mixing with people who did not care a fig for literature, somehow managed, during the short period granted him by the typically perverse destiny which haunts geniuses, to produce verse and prose of such virility, beauty, and tenderness that the following generation placed him higher than Pushkin: the ups of poets are but the seesaw reverses of their downs.

At fourteen he wrote a short lyrical poem "The Angel" which Russian critics have, not inadequately, described as coming straight from paradise; indeed, it contains a pure and truly heavenly melody brought unbroken to earth. At twenty-three he reacted to Pushkin's death by writing a poem which branded with its white fire the titled scoundrels who baited the greatest of all poets and kept fanning the flames of his African passions. And at twenty-five he resolutely turned to prose and would have achieved great things in that medium had not a perfectly avoidable bullet pierced his heart.

<sup>1</sup>1941 marks the centennial of the death of Mikhail Yurevich Lermontov (1814-1841). [Ed.]

He was an ardent admirer of Byron, but his best work discloses hardly a trace of this influence. Superficially, this influence is quite clear in his earlier lyrics.

Farewell! Nevermore shall we meet,  
We shall never touch hands—so farewell!  
Your heart is now free, but in none  
Will it ever be happy to dwell.

One moment together we came:  
Time eternal is nothing to this!  
All senses we suddenly drained,  
Burned all in the flame of one kiss.

Farewell! And be wise, do not grieve:  
Our love was too short for regret,  
And hard as we found it to part  
Harder still would it be if we met.

Women prefer him to Pushkin because of the pathos and loveliness of his personality, singing so urgently through his verse. Radical critics, people who expect poets to express the needs of the nation, have welcomed in Lermontov the first bard of the revolution. Although he did not allude to politics in his works, what they admired in him was his violent pity for the underdog, and one pessimistic critic has suggested that had Lermontov lived he might have used his talent in the 'sixties and 'seventies to write novels with an obvious social message. Here and there, in the sobbing rhythm of some of his lines, I cannot help feeling that the tearful rhymsters of later generations, such as Nadson, who wallowed in civic lamentations, owe something to Lermontov's pathos in singing the death of a soldier or that of his own soul. Children in schools have been greatly tormented by being made to learn by heart yards and yards of Lermontov. He has been put to music by composers. There is a dreadful opera by Rubinstein based on his "Demon." A great painter treated his "Demon" in quite a different way and in terms of such peacock colors amid diamond-blazing eyes and purple clouds that Lermontov's genius ought to sleep content. Though decidedly patchy, he remains for the true lover of poetry a miraculous being whose development is something of a mystery.

It might be said that what Darwin called "struggle for existence" is really a struggle for perfection, and in that respect Nature's main and most admirable device is optical illusion. Among human beings, poets are the best exponents of the art of deception. Such poets as Coleridge, Baudelaire, and Lermontov have been particularly good at creating a fluid and iridescent medium wherein reality discloses the dreams of which it consists. A geological transverse section of the most prosaic of towns may show the



fabulous reptile and the fossil fern fantastically woven into its foundation. Travellers have told us that in the mysterious wastes of Central Asia mirages are sometimes so bright that real trees are mirrored in the sham shimmer of optical lakes. Something of the effect of these manifold reflections is characteristic of Lermontov's poetry, and especially of that most fatamorganic poem of his which might bear the title: *A Dream in a Dream of a Dream in a Dream*. In this respect the poem is, as far as I know, perfectly unique. But curiously enough, none of Lermontov's contemporaries, least of all the poet himself, ever noticed the remarkable telescopic process of images that it contains. Here is this fourfold dream:

I dreamt that with a bullet in my side  
In a hot gorge of Daghestan I lay.  
Deep was the wound and steaming, and the tide  
Of my life-blood ebbed drop by drop away.

Alone I lay amid a silent maze  
Of desert sand and bare cliffs rising steep,  
Their tawny summits burning in the blaze  
That burned me too; but lifeless was my sleep.

And in a dream I saw the candle-flame  
Of a gay supper in the land I knew;  
Young women crowned with flowers. . . . And my name  
On their light lips hither and thither flew.

But one of them sat pensively apart,  
Not joining in the light-lipped gossiping,  
And there alone, God knows what made her heart,  
Her young heart dream of such a hidden thing . . . .

For in her dream she saw a gorge, somewhere  
In Daghestan, and knew the man who lay  
There on the sand, the dead man, unaware  
Of steaming wound and blood ebbing away.

Let us call the initial dreamer  $A^1$ , which will thus apply to the poetical personality of Lermontov, the live summary of the mirages involved. For simplicity's sake we shall ignore the argument that it was not he who really dreamt, but the poet he imagined dreaming. He dreams of his lifeless body lying among the yellow cliffs, and this second personality we shall call  $A^2$ . This  $A^2$  dreams of a young woman in a distant land, and here is the central and deepest point of the whole image complex, which point we shall term  $A^3$ . In so far as the imagined existence of the young woman is implied, her dream of  $A^2$  should be called  $A^4$ : however, this  $A^4$  is a reversion to  $A^2$ , though not quite identical with it, and thus the circle is completed. The

dreamer drifts back to the surface, and the full stop at the end of the poem comes with the exactitude of an alarm clock.

Incidentally, the poet got so thoroughly immersed in these dreams within dreams that in the last stanza he committed a solecism (omitted in my translation) which is also unique; for it is the solecism of a solipsist, and solipsism has been defined by Bertrand Russell as the *reductio ad absurdum* of subjective idealism: we dream our own selves. So, even in the methodical approach itself, we observe a quaint mirage of two terms which look almost alike. The solecism in question has been unconsciously retained (and aggravated) in John Pollen's translation of the poem in Leo Weiner's *Anthology of Russian Literature*. The young woman dreams that on that torrid sand "the well-known body lay." Lermontov has "the familiar corpse" ("znakomyi trup"), his intention having been evidently to say as tersely as possible: "the corpse of the young woman's good acquaintance." This "familiar corpse" or "well-known body" was unfortunately produced not merely as a phenomenon of bad grammar, but because in the poem itself the dead and the living got so hopelessly mixed. In a way, perhaps the poem would be less miraculous had not that blunder occurred, but I am afraid that what a Russian reader can skip, will not escape the humor of an Anglo-Saxon, and anyway Pollen's "well-known body" is much too large. And I am reminded, too, of that Chinese poet who dreamt he was a butterfly and then, when he awoke, could not solve the problem whether he was a Chinese poet who had dreamt that entomological dream, or a butterfly dreaming that it was a Chinese poet.

To be a good visionary you must be a good observer. The better you see the earth the finer your perception of heaven will be; and, inversely, the crystal-gazer who is not an artist will turn out to be merely an old bore. Lermontov's long poem "The Demon" devoted to the lurid love-affair between a demon and a Georgian girl is built on a commonplace of mysticism. But it is saved by the bright pigments of definite landscapes painted here and there by a magic brush. There is nothing of an Oriental poet's passion for gems and generalizations here; Lermontov is essentially a European traveller, admiring distant lands, as all Russian poets have been, although they might never have left their hearths. The very love for the native countryside is with Lermontov (and others) European, in the sense that it is both irrational and founded on concrete sensual experience. "An unofficial English rose," or "the spires and farms" seen from a hilltop in Shropshire, or the little river at home which a Russian pilgrim, many centuries ago, recalled when he saw the Jordan, or merely those "green fields" a famous fat man babbled about as he died, offer a thrill of indescribable love for one's country that history books and statues in public gardens fail to provoke. But what is quite peculiar to "native land" descriptions in Russian poems is the atmosphere of nostalgia which sharpens the senses but

distorts objective relationships. The Russian poet talks of the view from his window as if he were an exile dreaming of his land more vividly than he ever saw it, although at the moment he may be actually surveying the acres he owns. Pushkin longed to travel to Africa not because he was sick of Russian scenery but because he was eager to long for Russia when he would be abroad. Gogol in Rome spoke of the spiritual beauty of physical remoteness; and Lermontov's attitude to the Russian countryside implies a similar emotional paradox.

If I do love my land, strangely I love it:  
'Tis something reason cannot cure.  
Glories of war I do not covet,  
But neither peace proud and secure,  
Nor the mysterious past and dim romances  
Can spur my soul to pleasant fancies.

And still I love thee—why I hardly know:  
I love thy fields so coldly meditative,  
Native dark swaying woods and native  
Rivers that sea-like foam and flow.

In a clattering cart I love to travel  
On country roads: watching the rising star,  
Yearning for sheltered sleep, my eyes unravel  
The trembling lights of sad hamlets afar.

Also I love the smoke of burning stubble,  
Vans huddled in the prairie night;  
Corn on a hill crowned with the double  
Grace of twin birches gleaming white.

Few are the ones who feel the pleasure  
Of seeing barns bursting with grain and hay,  
Well-thatched cottage-roofs made to measure  
And shutters carved and windows gay.

And when the evening dew is glistening,  
Long may I hear the festive sound  
Of rustic dancers stamping, whistling  
With drunkards clamoring around.

There has been a good deal of nonsense written recently by Russian critics about *The Hero of Our Time*'s being the chef d'œuvre of the Russian novel, and thus ranking higher than, for instance, Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. It is the same kind of attitude, really a commonplace turned inside out, as when people maintain that Verlaine's whole poetical output is inferior to

his religious poems (so violently called by Tolstoy "a mass of catholic platitudes") or that the greatest English poet was Donne (a fad popular among would-be highbrows fifteen years ago).

First of all, *The Hero of Our Time* is not really a novel at all, but a group of five short stories. The first, "Bela," relates the narrator's meeting the Caucasian veteran, Captain Maxim Maximych, on the road from Tiflis to Vladikavkaz; Maximych tells the story of Pechorin, who was a subaltern for a time in a fort on the mountain frontier and had a love-affair with a native girl. The movement of Lermontov's plots follows the line of least resistance, and eavesdropping is a trick extensively used by him. But in "Bela" we don't mind the device so much because the eavesdropper's story is so good. A Cherkess boy is overheard trying to entice a certain sheep-thief to sell him his horse, a wonderful animal wonderfully described. Finally, the other retorts that his steed would throw the boy off at once.

"Me?" cried Azamat in mad fury, and the steel of a child's dagger rang against the man's armor. A vigorous hand pushed him away, and he crashed backwards into a fence with such force that the fence rocked. In a minute or two there was a terrific hullabaloo: Azamat had run in with his coat all torn, shrieking that Kazbich had tried to kill him. Everybody rushed out, rifles were gripped. . . . Screams, tumult, gunshots. But Kazbich was already on his priceless horse and twisted and wheeled among the crowd in the street as he struck out in defence with his sword.

This is the crisp, colorful, economical style that in Lermontov's time was a complete novelty.

The essential narrative is set going by the boy's offer of his sister in exchange for the horse. But it is Pechorin who arranges the thing and gets the girl. Not only new colors but the art of rendering human gestures appears with Lermontov for the first time. Maximych, after a silence, suddenly stamps on the floor: "Never shall I forgive myself one thing—why the hell did I tell Pechorin what I overheard?" And generally speaking, the character of Maxim Maximych, a simple old warrior with sound principles and broad views, is extraordinarily well suggested. As Lermontov and he reach the mountain pass (they are fellow-travellers and Maximych tells him the story as they rest on the way), and the East is clear and golden bright while the rest of the sky is replete with snow-threatening clouds, the younger man feels this impact of beauty and, turning to his silent stolid companion, remarks: "I presume you are quite used to all this loveliness?" "Well," answers Maxim Maximych, "one also gets used to the whistle of bullets, I mean one gets used to concealing the involuntary beating of one's heart." When they reach the next shelter, Maximych goes on with his story. The robber Kazbich, in revenge, wounds Bela mortally in the back while Pechorin, who had been leaving her too much alone, was out hunting wild boars.

I led him out of the room where she had just died, and we went up to the rampart of the fortress. For a good while we walked together up and down without speaking a word, our hands behind our backs. His face did not express anything particular, and this angered me: were I in his place, I should have died of grief there and then. At length he sat down on the ground in the shade and began to scrawl something on the sand with a bit of stick. Well, you know just for decency's sake, I thought, I had better offer him some consolation: I started speaking; he lifted his head—and laughed. That laugh sent a shiver down my spine. I got up and went to order the coffin.

In the next story, "Maxim Maximych," the author meets the good veteran once again and, as fate would have it (coincidence is the sister of eaves-dropping), Pechorin happens to arrive at the same roadside inn. There is a very vivid description of his appearance—fair skin, dark hair, dark moustache ("which like the black mane and tail of a white horse denote race"), queer steel-bright eyes (not velvety, mark), expensive linen, and well-cut frockcoat; also his carriage and his gruff self-sufficient lackey, the grotesque shade of his master. Pechorin is on the way to Persia, is anxious to hurry on, and poor old Maxim Maximych is very much hurt by the casual bored greeting which his former companion gives him after all these years. With tears of anger and disappointment in his eyes, he tosses over to the author a bundle of Pechorin's manuscripts which have been in his keep, and the next three stories come from these papers, which the author, as it were, publishes after learning of Pechorin's death on his way back from Persia. It is curious to note how authors of fiction in all countries have kept prefacing romantic stories with the explanation that the originals were given them or, still worse, discovered by them in an old chest of drawers. This is, I suppose, an old-fashioned form of that atrocious modern thing, atrociously termed "human interest."

The next story (the first one from Pechorin's diary), "Taman," is a kind of mystery story, with Pechorin playing the part of the amateur detective. One day he happens to disturb some smugglers in a lonely spot on the East shore of the Black Sea: on sunny mornings one could discern from the beach "the distant Crimean shore which stretches in a violet line with a cliff at the end." I note this sentence because this was probably the very first time that a Russian writer saw that color. The story is chiefly important for its concise, beautifully graduated, descriptive passages (a Chekhov feature), such as those referring to the hut where the hero lived, the golden sheen on the sunburnt neck of the girl who was involved in the smuggling business, and the fierce struggle in the boat. But it is not the masterpiece of Russian fiction suggested by some critics. The initial idea that the officer Pechorin, seeing people secretly carrying bundles to a boat in the night, did not leap at once to the obvious conclusion is, to say the least, unsound.



But "Taman" has nevertheless that style, that grace, that vigor which can be achieved only by a great writer.

The story "The Fatalist" is merely an intensified anecdote akin to the tales of Pushkin. The longest one, "Princess Mary," is probably the most important of the five. At a Caucasian watering-place, where the local ladies "are used to finding an ardent heart under a numbered army button and a cultured mind under a white cap," Pechorin and Grushnitsky are attracted by a young girl who is there with her mother. Grushnitsky is a parody of the Byronic young man—pompous, vain, full of himself, falsely *blasé*, proud of a slight wound, and flaunting a soldier's rough greatcoat. The young girl, Princess Mary, is described in the good old fashion, samples of which may be found in Dickens or Thackeray:

She wore a *gris-de-perle* dress with long sleeves; a light silken *fichu* floated around her slender neck; puce colored boots encased at the ankles her spare little feet so nicely that even one not versed in the mysteries of beauty would have uttered an exclamation—at least of astonishment. Her light but noble gait conveyed a sense of virginity defying definition but intelligible to the eye. As she passed by us, we caught a whiff of exquisite perfume remindful of that which sometimes lingers about a charming woman's letter. She had velvety eyes without luster.

Curiously enough, Lermontov gives his own eyes to a woman.

The story is really a medley of more or less brilliant aphorisms interspersed with illustrations in narrative form. Pechorin, who maintains that happiness is merely a satisfaction of pride, does his best to seduce the young lady whom Grushnitsky loves. It is spoiled, as are the other stories, by the usual method employed by Lermontov in order to speed up the climax—persistent and quite unjustified eavesdropping on the part of the storyteller. Chance keeps putting him into such a position as to make him aware of every stage of the conspiracy that the jealous Grushnitsky and his boon companions are weaving in order to involve Pechorin in a duel. The description of the encounter is splendid, and, though the reader is evidently aware that Pechorin (being the narrator) cannot be killed, a succession of real thrills is connected with Pechorin's knowledge that his opponent had tampered with the pistols.

In Russian schools, at least in my day, a favorite theme for compositions was "Onegin and Pechorin." The parallel is obvious, but quite superficial. Pushkin's Onegin stretches himself throughout the book and yawns. Lermontov's Pechorin does nothing of the sort—he laughs and bites. With his immense store of tenderness, kindness, and heroism behind his cynical and arrogant appearance, he is a deeper personality than the cold lean fop so delightfully depicted by Pushkin.

It is also very instructive to compare "Princess Mary" to Chekhov's novelette "The Duel." It is the same setting, the same types, altered inas-

much as Chekhov's period was seventy years later. People are more lightly dressed, the air is warmer and damper, the characters are more provincial and human, sharp epigrams have turned into good-natured humor, while brilliant conversations of the Byronic type have degenerated into those Chekhovian philosophic discussions which lead nowhere. The satanic Doctor Werner of "Princess Mary" has become the genial, flabby, incompetent, and charming Chekhovian doctor; the heroine is no longer the aristocratic beauty in *gris-perle*, but a vapid, vulgar, perfectly human woman. With a kind of impish thoroughness, Chekhov repeats all the details of Lermontov's story in the terms of his own period and art. Pechorin contends that a man must adopt a scientific attitude towards his own soul: analyse himself, turn all the screws, examine all the actions of which he is capable. Then he should derive satisfaction from self-knowledge completely mastered; and in the highest state of self-knowledge man may appreciate, at its worth, the laws and justice of Providence. Now, Onegin did not bother about all these things, and the character in Chekhov's story, the young zoölogist, looked at life from a purely practical point of view—"survival of the fittest" and no nonsense. In their respective duels, Onegin kills a friend because tradition and fashion had placed a carved pistol in his hand, Pechorin shoots down the parody of his own self, and incidentally the Byronic idea. And finally, Chekhov's slightly Germanized hero is merely bent upon exterminating what he calls vermin when he aims his pistol at the weak, nervous, voluble, inefficient Russian intellectual of the 'nineties, who is saved from death only by the exclamation of a friend hiding in the bushes, a little Russian priest somewhat like Chesterton's Father Brown.

There is an old peasant in southeastern Russia who is said to be 127 years old today, which happens to be exactly the age Lermontov would have been, had abnormal longevity coincided with genius. That venerable native is, it is further said, as clear-witted as any robust old man, but romance is baffled at this point. For all he has to tell of past things in the remoteness of his memory is merely a mechanical repetition of summers and winters, sowing and reaping, kinsmen born and kinsmen dead, fat years and lean years, with a few epidemics and anachronisms thrown in. Would Lermontov, had he lived, have held the promise of his tremendous snow-crested youth, is another question; but admirers of his verse can hardly be expected to console themselves with the thought that the fates acted according to a knowledge of the answer. And perhaps one summer day, a little more than a century ago, the exaggerated ancient I am thinking of, a young man then, tramping along a dusty road, heard the rattle of wheels behind him, and stepped aside, and turned his head, and caught an utterly forgotten glimpse of a moody officer with dark eyes, looking at the silver-grass plain as he drove by toward the distant mountains.

# Tolstoy Gets Married\*

BY ERNEST J. SIMMONS

COUNT TOLSTOY summed up his distraught state of mind at the conclusion of his pedagogical work in 1862 in *Confession*: "I should then perhaps have come to that despair I arrived at fifteen years later, if there had not been one side of life still unexplored by me and promising me salvation: that was family life."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, from his early youth he had been searching for family happiness, not yet recognizing it, as he did later, as one aspect in his endless struggle between good and evil. In his old age he looked back with frank disgust on this period as one in which the selfish pursuit after personal pleasure had predominated. And with a sense of horror he severely castigated himself for his sins of the flesh. In this, of course, he was unduly harsh. If his capacity for sensual pleasure was great, it was not abnormal. The most intimate pages of his diary reveal simply a strong, healthy, animal nature, and at the same time they record a manly struggle against excesses. Neither in his life nor in his art is there a suggestion of joyless profligacy or sniggering indecency. Yet the time would come, after his tremendous spiritual revelation, when he could not avoid the temptation to place family happiness on the side of evil. His moral dualism was the conflict of all mankind: a struggle between conscience and the appetites, reason and the vital impulses, order and life. Both sides were strong within him. His appetites and his capacity for enjoying them were far above the average, and his craving to bring order into the chaos of life was unquenchable. He could not eliminate either, nor could he be satisfied with anything less than absolute victory. In this lies his greatness.

At this point in his career, however, Tolstoy dreamt about that still unexplored realm of life—family happiness—as a positive good. It had been an ideal, the anticipation of which had comforted him in penitent moments after guilty pleasures or during those periods when his search for truth and goodness had led him into a blind alley of despair. Like Levin in *Anna Karenina*, marriage for Tolstoy was synonymous with the joys of family life. A wife, curiously enough, seemed merely the indispensable instrument for achieving the ideal. On several occasions in the past he had played with the notion of marriage, but only now did there exist for him that favorable conjunction of forces that appears to determine the ascendancy of marriage in a man's life.

\*The present article is part of a new biography of Tolstoy, now in the course of preparation and based on much fresh material. The publishers, Oxford University Press, have kindly given their permission for the advance publication of this chapter.

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by N. Gusev, *Tolstoy v molodosti*, Moscow, 1927, p. 435.

## I

For some time now Tolstoy had been weighing in the scales every eligible girl who crossed his path, but all had been found wanting. About the latest of these, Ekaterina Tyutcheva, he wrote to his cousin, Alexandra Tolstaya, immediately after his return from abroad in May, 1861: "The excellent girl E. is too much of a hothouse plant, too trained in 'foolproof enjoyment' to be able to share my work or even to sympathize with it. She is occupied with the preparation of moral sweetmeats, and I have to do with soil and manure."<sup>2</sup> Here, as in all other cases, he unconsciously demanded perfection to compensate for an absence of love. The passionate experience with his peasant Aksinya Bazykina,<sup>3</sup> who seemed so much like a wife to him, had strangely failed to teach him that there was no substitute for love.

Tolstoy had almost reached the age of thirty-four. He envied the ideal family happiness of his friend, the poet Fet, and it pained him to think that he might long since have had children of his own. Was he not now too old? At times this thought enabled him to dismiss the compelling urge to marry with a sense of relief. He realized that it must be soon or never. At this critical time he remarked to his sister: "Mashinka, the Bers family is especially attractive to me, and if I ever marry, it will be into this family."<sup>4</sup>

The mother, Lyubov A. Bers, only two years older than Tolstoy, had been his childhood playmate. She had grown up at Krasnoe, an estate some twenty-five miles from Yasnaya Polyana. A. M. Islenov, her father, who had been a close friend of Tolstoy's father, was an unusual character, a striking type of the energetic, hard-living old Russian provincial nobility. When only sixteen, Lyubov married the thirty-six-year-old Dr. A. E. Bers, who had been summoned from Tula to attend her in an illness. They settled in Moscow, where both the doctor's practise and family flourished. His engaging manner with the ladies, and perhaps his medical skill, gained him many patients among wealthy aristocrats, and he was eventually appointed Court physician with quarters in the Kremlin. Here his five sons and three daughters grew up. Fet, whom Tolstoy introduced into the family in 1862, described them as follows: "I found the doctor an amiable old gentleman of courteous manners and his wife a handsome, majestic brunette, who obviously ruled the household. I refrain from describing the three young ladies, the youngest of whom possessed an admirable contralto voice. All of them, notwithstanding the watchful supervision of their mother and their irreproachable modesty, had that attractive quality which the French call *du chien*."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup>*Perepiska L. N. Tolstova s gr. A. A. Tolstoy*, St. Petersburg, 1911, p. 150.

<sup>3</sup>At this time (1862) Tolstoy was still in love with this Yasnaya Polyana peasant, by whom he had a child.

<sup>4</sup>T. A. Kuzminskaya, *Moya zhizn doma i v Yasnoi Polyane*, Moscow, 1927, I, 75.

<sup>5</sup>A. A. Fet, *Moi vospominaniya*, Moscow, 1890, I, 388.

In 1862, Liza, the oldest of the three sisters, was nineteen, a beautiful girl, tall, with fine features and serious, expressive eyes. Hers was a cold, unsociable nature, however, and she held herself aloof in the household. Eternally with a book in her hand, she scorned the customary games and amusements of a large family and gave herself up to things of the mind.<sup>6</sup> Tanya, three years younger than Liza, was a striking contrast to her sister. Affectionately nicknamed "Tatyanchik the Imp," she was her father's favorite and the spoiled tyrant of the household. Her passionate, artistic nature bubbled over with enthusiasm and excitement on the slightest provocation, and although something of an egotistical little show-off, her warm heart was always filled with irrepressible love for everyone and everything around her.<sup>7</sup>

The nature of eighteen-year-old Sonya (Sofya Andreevna), a healthy, rosy girl with great brown eyes and dark braids, was in a sense a mean between the two extremes of her older and younger sisters. Despite her lively disposition, she affected a sentimentality that easily slipped into melancholy. Sonya's father remarked that she could never be completely happy, an observation that justly characterized her both as a girl and as a married woman. In her happiness something always seemed to be lacking, and she once admitted to Tanya that she could always find sorrow in her joy. Liza and Sonya were educated by expensive tutors at home, and both girls passed the examinations that qualified them for teaching. Sonya loved literature, painting, and music, but in none of them did she possess any exceptional talents. Tanya, with her fine voice and artistic ability, was destined for a musical career by her parents.

Expansive hospitality reigned in the Bers household. Guests were endless, and on holidays the favorite "Ankovsky pie"<sup>8</sup> was always served, a dish that later symbolized for Tolstoy the material well-being of the privileged classes. The children were constantly entertaining crowds of young people with games and music, and often they put on plays. The gelid Liza maintained an excessively decorous deportment amid these carefree youthful gatherings, and her stern mother held her up to her sisters as a model of correct behavior. But Sonya and Tatyanchik the Imp secretly yearned to turn the heads of the uniformed students whom their oldest brother, a member of the cadet corps, brought home on vacations. One of them, Mitrofan Polivanov, had already turned Sonya's head. They whispered eternal devotion to each other, but Mitrofan, with the magnanimity of a boyish lover, graciously granted her complete freedom to break her plighted word should

<sup>6</sup>Many of Liza's traits appear in the characterization of Vera Rostova in *War and Peace*.

<sup>7</sup>Tanya was the principal model for the unforgettable heroine of *War and Peace*—Natasha Rostova.

<sup>8</sup>A dish named after a frequent guest and relation of the family, Doctor Anke, who was responsible for the recipe.



she fall in love with another. The little firebrand Tanya, who still played with her favorite doll, Mimi, shared Sonya's secrets of the heart, and in turn confessed her own romantic passion for her cousin Kuzminsky.<sup>9</sup> Here was a merry society of Moscow girls with their ribbons, calicoes, shy coquetry, and all the poetry and stupidities of youth.

## II

Since 1856 Tolstoy had been making occasional visits to the Bers family. When he returned from abroad in 1861, he was struck by the change in the sisters. The awkward girls had been transformed into attractive young ladies. Liza and Sonya had finished their schooling, wore long dresses, and did up their hair in the latest coiffures. He grew more interested and now visited frequently. With the bookish Liza he discussed literature, and urged her to write articles for his pedagogical magazine. Duets on the piano or a quiet game of chess delighted the sentimental Sonya. With Tatyanchik the Imp, he played the school-master, set problems in arithmetic, obliged her to recite verses, and when success crowned her efforts, he triumphantly carried her around the room on his back.

Tolstoy quickly became a favorite in the family, and the merry household grew still merrier when he was present. He would gather them all about the piano to sing gypsy songs, or he would accompany Tanya in a solo. When her performance particularly pleased him, he would laughingly call her "Madame Viardot" after the great singer. Sometimes he improvised subjects for brief operas and obliged the young people to make up the words (the more incomprehensible the better) which they sang to familiar motifs.

These frequent visits to a family with at least two marriageable girls soon set tongues to wagging. Gossip represented Tolstoy as the suitor of Liza. His sister, a life-long friend of mother Bers, favored Liza. Such a solid, serious, and well-educated girl, Marya told him, would make an excellent wife. The solid Liza was indifferent at first, but persistent gossip began to arouse her from her books. All noticed that she paid more attention to her appearance, and soon she was madly in love.

From the very first, however, as his diary indicates, the serious Liza left Tolstoy quite cold. "Liza Bers tempts me," he wrote in September, 1861, "but this will not do. Calculation alone is not enough, and there is no feeling."<sup>10</sup> The spirited Imp was more to his liking, but she was still a child. On the other hand, he began to observe that Sonya grew more attractive with every passing day. Her Polivanov was away in St. Petersburg. She wept

<sup>9</sup>Traits of both Polivanov and Kuzminsky appear in the characterization of Prince Boris Drubetskoy in *War and Peace*.

<sup>10</sup>*Dnevnik*, September 22, 1861; original.

over him and eagerly read the letters this delicate swain sent to her younger sister. Somehow, the idea of "*le comte*" as a lover had not occurred to her. She had known him as a little girl when she had gone into raptures over his early tales and memorized whole passages of them. Sonya regarded the author through a prism of poetic ecstasy. He became her shining hero. She tied ribbons to the chair on which he sat, and even wrote out several lines from *Youth* that she wore next to her heart as a precious jewel. Sonya was then a child of eleven. Now she was eighteen, and a furtive mouse of an idea crept into her mind that she was not unattractive to this man almost twice her age. His face was common, almost ugly, but there was a strange charm and spiritual power in his piercing glance. Then he was also a count, a famous author, and the possessor of a large estate. It was a challenge to win the love of such a man. The more her thoughts dwelt upon him, the paler grew the image of her young cadet at his military studies in St. Petersburg. And suddenly Sonya was almost ready to confess to herself that she was in love not with Polivanov but with Tolstoy.

### III

When Tolstoy visited the Bers family in May 1862, on his way to Samara, it is possible that he vaguely sensed his growing interest in Sonya. On this same occasion there was certainly little doubt in Sonya's mind about the nature of her feeling for him. About three weeks after his return in July, a series of events threw his emotions into a turmoil. For mother Bers decided to take her three daughters on a visit to Ivitsy, the estate of their grandfather. On the way she planned to stop over at Yasnaya Polyana, some thirty-five miles from Ivitsy, in order to see her childhood friend, Marya Tolstaya. No doubt this ambitious mother also had in mind the fact that her friend's brother was being much talked of as a suitable match for her eldest daughter.

The party arrived at Yasnaya Polyana in the early evening. Tolstoy tried to conceal his agitation over all this charming feminine company by indulging in gestures of fussy hospitality. It was discovered that one bed was lacking. He suggested a huge armchair, and Sonya at once elected it for herself. With awkward, unaccustomed movements he began to spread the sheets, and these preparations filled her with a pleasant sense of intimacy. While the table was being set for supper, Sonya wandered into a small reception hall off the dining room. Venetian doors in the center wall opened on to a balcony from which one had a clear view of the countryside. She took a chair out on the balcony and sat there to admire the landscape. Forbidden thoughts, happy and serious, ran through her maiden mind. Tolstoy called her to supper, but she declined. Bits of the merry conversation floated out to her. Without finishing his meal Tolstoy finally joined Sonya. She did not remember their conversation, only that he said: "How clear and

simple you are,"<sup>11</sup> and this pleased her. That night she fell happily asleep in the armchair, her young heart gladdened by the thought that *he* had prepared this bed for her with his own hands.

The following day Tolstoy, rid of his initial feeling of constraint with his guests, became the soul of easy hospitality. Neighbors called, and a picnic was planned. He invited Sonya to accompany him on horseback while the rest of the party went in a carriage. As she cantered beside him, Sonya thought she could never be happier. They halted by a stack of fresh hay in a meadow. The meal was enlivened by his banter and merrymaking, and at its conclusion nothing would do but that they must all climb on the haystack and sing songs.

The guests continued their journey to Ivitsy the next day, promising to call again on their way home. Lively grandfather Islenev received them joyfully, pinching the fresh cheeks of his granddaughters and ordering all manner of old-fashioned entertainment for these "Moscow ladies" as he called them. Shoals of neighbors were invited, and there were rides, picnics, and at night dances for the young people and whist for their parents.

The day after the arrival of the girls Tolstoy suddenly appeared on his big white horse. Liza blushed, accepting it as a compliment, and so did Sonya, who immediately became unnaturally lively. But it was Sonya that he singled out for his special attention, and the observant Tatyanchik read in her sister's eyes: "I want to love you but I'm afraid." Polivanov and Liza, like ghosts, stood always before Sonya.

At the dancing the following evening Tolstoy preferred to play cards, or talk with the mothers and fathers. He was too old, he told Tanya and Sonya, when they teased him to dance. After supper the capricious Tanya was asked to sing. She refused, and to escape her petitioners ran into the drawing room and hid under the piano. Suddenly Tolstoy and Sonya entered. They seemed agitated. Both Sonya and the hidden Tanya, who did not dare to move, have left substantially similar accounts of what next took place. Sonya wished to leave, for her stern mother had already ordered her to bed.

"Sofya Andreevna, wait a moment," pleaded Tolstoy.

"What for?"

"Read what I am going to write for you."

"All right," she agreed.

"But I shall write only the initial letters and you must guess what the words are."

"How so? But that is impossible! Well, write."

Tolstoy wrote with a piece of chalk on the surface of a card table the letters: "Y.y.a.n.o.h.r.m.t.s.o.m.a.a.t.i.o.h."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup>S. A. Tolstaya, *Dnevnik*, Moscow, 1928, I, 11.

<sup>12</sup>The initial letters of the Russian words, of course, are different, but the following translation is an exact rendering of the Russian sentence.

Sonya read: "Your youth and need of happiness remind me too strongly of my age and the impossibility of happiness."

"My heart beat so loudly," recalled Sonya, "something pounded in my temples, my face burned . . . it seemed to me at that minute that I was capable of anything, understood all, encompassed the impossible."

Then Tolstoy wrote further: "I.y.f.e.a.f.o.a.m.a.y.s.L.D.m.w.y.s.T."

Again Sonya read: "In your family exists a false opinion about me and your sister Liza. Defend me with your sister Tanechka."

Not even Lev Nikolaevich was surprised, wrote Sonya, of her ability to solve this difficult puzzle. "It was as though it were a matter of course." But the concealed Tanya remembered that Tolstoy prompted her sister in several of the words.<sup>13</sup>

At the conclusion of the second sentence, Sonya, hearing her mother calling her to bed, ran out of the room. Before she fell asleep that night, she wrote the sentences in her diary. "I confusedly understood," she concluded her account of this incident, "that something serious and significant had taken place between him and me, something that could not cease there."<sup>14</sup>

Tolstoy departed the next day. Once again he saw the Bers family at Yasnaya Polyana on their return journey to Moscow. When they were saying their farewells, to the surprise of all he announced that he would drive to the city with them. His simple excuse was that it would now be boring and empty at Yasnaya Polyana. The sisters were delighted, and Sonya must have imagined that her battle was nearly won. For most of the journey he contrived to sit with her alone, somewhat to the indignation of the now jealous Liza. During the long hours of the trip he told Sonya the story of his life, of the beauties of the Caucasus, and of his adventures there. Perhaps like Othello he hoped to win this credulous girl by an account of the dangers he had been through. Unlike Desdemona, however, she fell asleep before his story ended. But until the fatigue of the journey had taken its toll, she had been a most eager and enraptured listener to this real tale of her favorite author.

#### IV

It was the middle of August. The affairs of his school and periodical weighed upon Tolstoy, but he could not tear himself away from Moscow. Passion gambled with reason, and his future destiny was the stake. The Bers family moved to their summer house at Pokrovskoe, only eight miles from the city. Here Tolstoy was almost a daily caller, often walking the distance. His visits began to embarrass him as well as the members of the household, yet he could not stay away. The parents were confused as to his intentions and began to treat him with some restraint. Sonya, tortured by

<sup>13</sup>This scene was utilized by Tolstoy in describing Levin's proposal to Kitty in *Anna Karenina*.

<sup>14</sup>S. A. Tolstaya, *Dnevnik*, I, 15-16.

his uncertainty, received him with conflicting emotions, one day gay and bright, the next sad and gloomy. Why did he not declare himself?

At Pokrovskoe there were long walks together on beautiful moonlight nights, but no romantic scenes took place. Once Sonya sat in her father's carriage, from which the horses had just been unharnessed. She called out to Tolstoy in a merry mood: "When I'm an empress, I'll be driven about in such carriages." He impetuously seized the shafts, and with an unusual show of strength wheeled her around the yard, shouting: "This is the way my empress will ride!"<sup>15</sup>

September arrived and the family returned to Moscow. Tolstoy diligently continued his vigil at their house. In a moment of misplaced confidence, Sonya confessed to her mother that she expected a proposal from him. She was testily ordered to forget such nonsense and to cease imagining that everybody was in love with her. Meanwhile, father Bers began to grow angry with the ubiquitous Tolstoy for not making an offer to Liza.

Throughout all this period of indecision, Tolstoy kept his diary, and it is a sorry record of confusion and struggle. His first entry referring to Sonya occurs on August 23, after having spent the night at the Bers'. "She is a child!" he writes. "Just like one! O, if I could only place myself in a clear and honorable position . . . I'm afraid of myself: what if this be only a desire for love and not real love? I try to perceive only her insufficiencies. . . ." <sup>16</sup> The next day he is sad as he had not been for a long time. "I thought less of S., but when I did, it was fine."<sup>17</sup>

Two days later Tolstoy records that he walked to Pokrovskoe. "Quiet, cosy," he jots down. "Girls' laughter. S. bad, was vulgar, but she fills my mind." Then follow some interesting observations on the manuscript of a story he had begged from Sonya. She had written it sometime before and willingly let him have it now, perhaps in the hope that it would allay his doubts, and sting him to action. For the tale was a frank narrative of their relations, thinly disguised as fiction. Tolstoy is described as Dublitsky, a middle-aged man of unattractive appearance, energetic and wise, but with unstable convictions on life. Sonya, as Elena, falls in love with him, but worries about her young suitor Smirnov (Polivanov) and her older sister, who is in love with Dublitsky. In her perplexity she thinks of entering a convent, but in the end arranges a marriage between her sister and Dublitsky. Then Smirnov finally returns and marries Elena.

Sonya gained little by this transparent hint, although Tolstoy did finally admit to her that the tale had agitated him and kept him awake all night. The reactions he concealed from her, however, appear in the entry of the diary just quoted: "She gave me her story to read. What energy of truth and simplicity! Vagueness tortured her. I read all without anxiety, without a show of jealousy or envy, but the 'unusually unattractive appearance'

<sup>15</sup>Tolstaya, *Dnevnik*, I, 19.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, August 24, 1862.

<sup>16</sup>*Dnevnik*, August 23, 1862; original.



and 'instability of conviction,' hurt me much. I calmed myself. All this is not for me. Work, and just the satisfaction of one's needs."<sup>18</sup>

Did Tolstoy mean that all the beauty and youth of Sonya were not for him? that he was middle-aged, unattractive, and hence, ought to be content with work and the mere satisfaction of his normal needs? Such thoughts did prod his brain later like red-hot pokers. His imagined calm was murdered the moment Sonya entered his thoughts, and he could not keep her out of them. Two days after this entry (his thirty-fourth birthday), he busied himself with work and visits, and refused to be disturbed. But a "bouquet of letters and flowers" from the Bers family arrived. Sonya's brief contribution to the family's collective, congratulatory epistle—her first letter to him—set him off once again on the treadmill of his emotions. "If I were an empress," she wrote, recalling their recent pleasantries at Pokrovskoe, "I would send you on your birthday a most gracious mandate, but now, as a simple mortal, I *simply* congratulate you with having been born on one beautiful day, and I wish you many more and always, if possible, that you may look on them as you do now."<sup>19</sup> Was there some hidden meaning in this simple note? He tried to draft a reply, but the words would not come. Then he sought to regain tranquillity once more by reminding himself in the diary: "Ugly mug that you are! Think no more of marriage; your calling is something other, and for that much has been given you."<sup>20</sup>

This cheerless self-deception was banished the very next day by a visit to Sonya. And that night his new sensations were carefully noted down: "Not love as formerly," he wrote, "not jealousy, not even regret, but like it, something sweet—a little hope (which ought not to be). Pig! A little like regret and sadness. But the night was delicious and fine, a sweet feeling. She obliged me to decipher her letter. I became confused. She also. There was a scene. All this is unnatural. . . . Sad, but fine. Mashenka says: 'Why do you always wait?' Why not wait?"<sup>21</sup>

Such indecision was no comfort to Sonya's titillated emotions. It appears that at this point she treated him to a wholesome dose of jealousy. A history professor of thirty-five, N. A. Popov, had evinced an interest in her charms, and to do them more homage he had hired a summer house quite near Pokrovskoe. She liked the professor with his expressive gray eyes and slow, deliberate movements, and perhaps with design she would often engage him in serious conversation in Tolstoy's presence. The diary registers his immediate alarm: "To the Bers'. S[onya] with P[opov]. I'm not jealous," he protests, "I can hardly believe that I'm not. As if there were a quarrel, but it is night! She also says: 'It is sad and peaceful.' We walked, conversation, home for supper—her eyes, and the night! . . . Fool! She's not meant for you; yet I'm in love . . . I spent the night with them, did not sleep, and

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, August 26, 1862.

<sup>19</sup>S. A. Tolstaya, *Pisma k L. N. Tolstomu, 1862-1910*, ed. by A. L. Tolstaya and P. S. Popov, Moscow-Leningrad, 1936, No. 1, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup>*Dnevnik*, August 28, 1862; original.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, August 29, 1862.

always she. 'Have you not loved?' she says, and I feel so funny and happy."<sup>22</sup>

The worm of jealousy did gnaw at Tolstoy and intensified his passion. This slip of a girl was swiftly and utterly taking possession of his heart. He awakes in the morning with a sweet sense of the fullness of a life of love. He visits friends and thinks he hears Sonya's voice when some other girl speaks. By comparison, all other girls seem to him "vile, dried-up things in crinoline." In vain he tells himself that he is "an old devil" who ought to stick to his pedagogical articles.

Beginning with September the entries in the diary betray Tolstoy's soaring passion and at the same time his persistent and terrible doubts. On September 3, he wrote: "With them, at first nothing, then a walk . . . I am calm! I left and thought: either all is accidental, or an unusual refinement of feeling, or the most vulgar coquetry—today one thing, tomorrow another. . . . My future with a wife never seemed to me so clear, joyous, and calm. . . . *Memento*: Dublitsky, the old devil . . . Above all, it seems so simple, timely, with no passion, no fear, not a single moment of regret."<sup>23</sup> Two days later he took another walk with Sonya. They talked of love, and that night he could not sleep from happiness.

The next day, however, Tolstoy again petulantly reminded himself that he was too old for such nonsense, and having taken a walk all alone, he assured himself how agreeable it was. But his entry in the diary on the following day testifies to the permanency of his feeling for Sonya, for he mentions that he revealed the secret to his old Moscow friend Vasya Perfilev. Then he continues to confess his thoughts: "At home alone today to meditate at leisure on my own situation. Dublitsky, don't intrude where youth, poetry, beauty, and love are. For that, old man, there are youngsters. . . . Nonsense: the monastery, work, that is your lot, from the heights of which you may calmly and gladly contemplate this strange love and happiness—and I was in that monastery, and I shall return to it. Yes. My diary is insincere. *Arrière-pensée*: that she will be with me, beside me, that she will sit and read it, and . . . and that it is for her."<sup>24</sup>

On his visit the following day Tolstoy notices that father Bers sits angrily in his study. The whole family is grave and stern. He knows what they are waiting for. As he looks at the cold Liza, all he can think of is what a terrible misfortune it would be if she should become his wife. The next day he is comforted. Sonya blushes and grows agitated in his presence. "O, Dublitsky, do not dream!" he cautions himself in the diary. "I began to work but I could not go on. Instead of work, I wrote her a letter that I did not send. I cannot, cannot leave Moscow."<sup>25</sup> Sleep deserts him and he feels that he is acting like a boy of sixteen.

The letter has been preserved, and the embarrassing nature of its contents

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, August 30, 1862.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, September 3, 1862.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, September 7, 1862.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, September 9, 1862.

justified his decision not to send it. He explains that he never loved Liza, and, as that "unusually unattractive devil" Dublitsky, he can have no pretension to Sonya, whom he gladly and calmly regards as he would a child he loves. Then he pathetically and perhaps hopefully concludes: "I am Dublitsky, but I can never marry a woman merely because a wife is necessary. I demand the fearful, the impossible from marriage. I demand to be loved as I can love. But this is impossible."<sup>26</sup> And he adds a postscript that in the future he will cease to visit them.

As the tide of his emotions rose, Tolstoy's capacity for positive action seemed to diminish. He wrote that he waited for the evenings to see Sonya, like a schoolboy waiting for the coming of Sunday. Often now she greeted him sternly. After one such meeting on September 10, he entered in the diary: "I left discouraged again, but still more in love than before. *Au fond* sits hope. One must, it is necessary to cut this knot. . . . Lord help me, God, teach me! Again a sleepless, torturing night; I really feel, I who used to laugh over the sufferings of lovers. I deserve this punishment because of my ridiculing. How many plans I have formed to tell her or Tanechka, but all in vain. . . . Lord, help me, teach me! Mother of God, help me!"<sup>27</sup>

Tolstoy did not trust himself to make another visit the next day. But this brief separation only added flame to his passion. "I am in love as I never believed it possible to be in love," he wrote in the diary on September 12. "I am a madman, and shall shoot myself if this continues. Was with them this evening. She is charming in all respects. But I—I am the repulsive Dublitsky. I should have been on my guard sooner. But now I cannot stop. A. Dublitsky, I may be, but I am made beautiful by my love. Yes. I will go to them tomorrow morning. There have been minutes, but I have not made use of them. I have been timid; one simply must speak. I want to return at once and say all, and before everybody. Lord, help me!"<sup>28</sup>

This brave resolution deserted him on the following day. His entry reads: "Each day I think it is impossible to suffer more and at the same time to remain so happy, and each day I grow more frenzied. Again I departed anguished, remorseful, but happy at heart. Tomorrow I shall go as soon as I arise and tell all or . . . [he added: 'shall shoot myself,' but crossed this out]. Four o'clock in the morning. I have written a letter; I will give it to her tomorrow, i.e., today, the 14th. My God, how I fear to die. Happiness, and such a happiness, seems to me impossible. My God, help me!"<sup>29</sup>

Although Tolstoy visited Sonya on each of the next two days, he did not dare to present the letter. Such lack of resolve from a man of his age and experience with women may seem puzzling, yet it was in accord with his

<sup>26</sup>*Pisma k S. A. Tolstoy, 1862-1866* (L. N. Tolstoy, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Moscow, 1938, LXXXIII, 3-4.)

<sup>27</sup>*Dnevnik*, September 10, 1862; original.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, September 12, 1862.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, September 13, 1862.

nature and with the special circumstances of the situation. He had always been shy with women, and particularly with women of his own social standing. Then Sonya's description of Dublitsky had intensified his poignant feeling about the disadvantages of his unattractive appearance and of the considerable disparity in their ages. Finally, with his pride and egoism, he no doubt feared the consequences to him of a refusal.

Paradoxical as it may seem, the surprising fact is not Tolstoy's hesitation, but the comparative haste with which he acted. For years he had been searching for the woman who would make possible his ideal of family happiness. When he thought he had found her six years ago in Valerya Arseneva, he coolly subjected her to several months of painstaking analysis, in the course of which he itemized for her benefit all the lofty demands he would make upon his ideal wife. With Sonya he had decided upon marriage in a few weeks. His diary declared an initial determination to perceive only her insufficiencies, but he found none, or rather he did not search for them. There was no analysis of faults or virtues. He did not ask her what she most valued in life. Nor did it occur to him to seek in her a devotion to truth and goodness, as he had with Valerya. The moralist slumbered. Ideals nurtured in tranquillity were forgotten in the ebb and flow of passion. The former realist now did not need to persuade himself of his love. Sonya, with the instinct of a physically attractive girl in love, directed all her appeal to his senses, not to his reason, for she was fully aware of Tolstoy's failing for destructive analysis, as her characterization of Dublitsky indicates. The entries in his diary referring to his love reveal a man whose passions have been tremendously aroused. These reactions bear no similarity to those he expressed in the case of Valerya; they echo rather the ardent comments in the diary about his sensual feeling for his peasant Aksinya. When doubt creeps into his mind, and it continued to do so, it is not doubt of the reality of his passion, but of the ultimate wisdom of marriage.

## V

On the evening of September 16, Tolstoy called on the Bers family again. He seemed agitated. The letter he had written for Sonya three days before still nestled in his pocket. Both Sonya and her sister Tanya have left accounts of what happened.

Ill at ease, Tolstoy asked Sonya to play a duet with him and then decided not to. They sat quietly at the piano. She gently fingered a valse, *Il Baccio*, that she was learning in order to accompany her sister. His agitation quickly infected Sonya. She called to Tanya to sing the piece. Tanya agreed, but she noticed that the request seemed to displease him. She was in voice that night. Standing in the centre of the room, she soon forgot them both in her

rapt concentration on the song. Sonya stumbled on the accompaniment, and Tolstoy slipped into her place and took it up, at once giving new life to Tanya's voice and the words of the song. He promised himself that if Tanya took the final high note well, he would give Sonya the letter.<sup>30</sup> The little singer ended, soaring to the final high note with perfect ease.

"How you sing tonight!" he exclaimed in an excited voice.

At this moment Tanya was called from the room. They were alone.

"I wanted to speak with you," Tolstoy began, but he could not continue. "Here is a letter that I have been carrying around in my pocket for several days. Read it. I will wait for your answer."<sup>31</sup>

Sonya seized the letter and ran downstairs to her room, opened the envelope with trembling hands, and read:

"I have become unendurable. Every day for three weeks I have been saying: today I shall tell all, and I have been going away with the same anguish, remorse, fear, and happiness in my soul. And every night, as even now, I examine the past, torment myself, and say: why have I not spoken, and tell myself how and what I should have said. I have taken this letter with me in order to give it to you if I again find it impossible or lack the spirit to tell you all.

"*The false opinion in your family about me, it seems, arises from the belief that I am in love with your sister Liza. This is unfair. Your story put it into my head, and after reading it, I became convinced that I am Dublitsky, that to dream about happiness ill suits me, that your excellent, poetic demands of love . . . that I have not envied and will not envy the man you may love. It seemed to me that I can rejoice over you as over a child.*

"At Ivitsy I wrote: *Your presence too strongly reminds me of my age and the impossibility of happiness, and just you . . .*

"But even then and afterwards I lied to myself. Then even more I could have given over everything and again gone into my monastery of lonely work and become absorbed with affairs. Now I can do nothing of the kind, and I feel that I have made a mess of things in your family, that having grown cold, my dear relations with you, as with another honest person, are ended. But I cannot take my leave, and I do not dare remain. You, an honest person, and with hand on heart—*not leisurely, for God's sake, not leisurely*—tell me what to do. He who laughs last laughs best. I would have died with laughter if a month ago I had been told that I could suffer as I now suffer, and happily suffer. Tell me, as an *honest person*—do you wish to be my wife? Only if you can boldly say *yes* with all your soul, then you had better say no, if there is a shadow of doubt in you.

"For God's sake, question yourself well.

"It will be terrible for me to hear no, but I foresee it, and I will find in

<sup>30</sup>Tolstoy often decided to act positively or negatively on the basis of such wagers with himself, a habit he also attributed to Pierre in *War and Peace*.

<sup>31</sup>S. A. Tolstaya, *Dnevnikh*, I, 22.



myself the strength to bear it; but if as a husband I shall never be loved as I love, it will be terrible."<sup>32</sup>

The ecstatic Sonya did not pause to read through this tortured analysis of a heart enthralled. Her eager eyes quickly discovered the question: "Do you wish to be my wife?" That was enough. On the other side of the locked bedroom door she heard Liza's frightened voice:

"Sonya, what has the Count written to you? Speak!"

Sonya remained silent, tightly gripping the precious letter.

"Speak at once! What has the Count written you?" cried Liza again, an hysterical note in her voice.

"He has proposed to me," Sonya, with an effort, calmly answered.

"Refuse!" screamed Liza. "Refuse at once!" and she burst into sobs.

Tanya called her mother to quiet Liza. Sonya told her mother what had happened, and she was ordered to give Tolstoy her answer. She well remembered the scene: "I ran up the stairway as on wings, with terrible speed, shot by the dining room, the drawing room, and ran into mother's apartment. Lev Nikolaevich stood there, leaning against the wall in the corner of the room, waiting for me. I came to him and he took me by both hands."

"Well, what?" he asked.

"Of course, yes," I answered.

"In a few minutes the whole house knew what had happened and began to congratulate us."<sup>33</sup>

In his diary that night Tolstoy wrote: "I spoke. She—yes. She: like a wounded bird. There is nothing more to write. All this will not be forgotten and will not be written down."<sup>34</sup>

## VI

Congratulations were not quite as unanimous as Sonya suggests. The news threw father Bers into a rage. He refused at first to give his consent, for he had expected Tolstoy to propose to his eldest daughter. But the mother's tactful diplomacy, Sonya's tears, and even Liza's generous pleading won a begrudging blessing from him.

Tolstoy's choice of Sonya, however, caused some embarrassment. The day after the proposal, the name-day of Sonya and her mother, was turned into an occasion for announcing the engagement to many visiting relatives and friends. Sonya and Liza, as usual, were dressed alike—lilac gowns with white *barège* trimmings, open collars, and with lilac bows for corsage and on the shoulders. Both girls were pale and received the guests with tired eyes. To the customary name-day felicitations, the mother at first made the mistake of announcing to the guests that her daughter must also be congratulated on her engagement to Tolstoy. Many promptly turned

<sup>32</sup>*Pisma k S. A. Tolstoy, 1862–1866* (L. N. Tolstoy, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, LXXXIII, 16–17.

<sup>33</sup>S. A. Tolstaya, *Dnevnik*, I, 23.

<sup>34</sup>*Dnevnik*, September 16, 1862; original.

to the crimson and suffering Liza with the customary exclamations. One of her old professors, even when apprised of the mistake, naïvely remarked: "It is a shame that it was not Liza; she was such a good student."<sup>35</sup> Horror chilled Sonya when she saw in the throng the happy face of young Polivanov, resplendent in his new Guards uniform. Her brother perhaps prevented a scene by taking him aside and telling him the fatal news. Later, Sonya sought him out in an effort to explain. Her letter to Petersburg had not reached him.

"I knew," the unhappy Polivanov declared with tears in his eyes, "that you would forsake me; I felt it."<sup>36</sup>

The only solace Sonya could offer her childhood sweetheart was that she could forsake him only for one man—Tolstoy.

"Bridegroom, gifts, champagne," was Tolstoy's sole comment in his diary on this day of celebration.

Over the strenuous objections of mother Bers, he demanded that the marriage take place as soon as possible. The trousseau and various other preparations he impatiently brushed aside as needless delays. Finally, a date just one week after his proposal was decided upon. Every day he visited Sonya. With the conviction that there should be no secrets between them, he turned over his diaries to her, and with the unwisdom of a girl of eighteen she allowed herself to peer into this history of his past excesses and moral lapses. "I remember," she wrote later, "how terribly shocked I was by the reading of these diaries that he gave to me before my marriage out of a sense of personal duty. And to no purpose did I weep much upon glancing into his past."<sup>37</sup> Sonya forgave all but grew fearful over the possibility of losing the love of this man.

Tolstoy had his own fears, the fears that had tormented him from the moment he fell in love with Sonya. On the morning of the marriage day, September 23, he violated all proprieties<sup>38</sup> by suddenly appearing at her home. He at once overwhelmed her with questions and doubts about her love for him. It seemed to her as though he were afraid of marriage. Sonya began to weep. Her mother scolded him for his behavior, and he immediately left. Later, he wrote in his diary: "On the day of the marriage, fear, disbelief, and a desire to flee."<sup>39</sup> This momentary, almost terrified, prompting of some inner moral conscience that he was not destined for the joys of married life prophetically reflects the belief that he arrived at many years later.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>35</sup>S. A. Tolstaya, *Dnevnik*, I, 23.

<sup>36</sup>T. A. Kuzminskaya, *Moya zhizn doma i v Yasnoi Polyane*, I, 136.

<sup>37</sup>S. A. Tolstaya, *Dnevnik*, I, 24.

<sup>38</sup>According to custom, the bridegroom on the marriage day saw his bride only at the church.

<sup>39</sup>*Dnevnik*, September 20-24, 1862; original.

<sup>40</sup>This whole incident, as well as others connected with his marriage, are faithfully retold in the marriage scene of Levin and Kitty in *Anna Karenina*.

The marriage was to take place in the evening in the Court church of the Kremlin. Sonya's attendants dressed her in the wedding gown and veil. Then they awaited the arrival of Tolstoy's best man to tell them that the bridegroom was at the church. The minutes passed and still no news. The terrifying thought flashed into Sonya's mind, prompted by her painful session, with Tolstoy that morning, that he had actually run off. Finally, instead of the best man, Tolstoy's faithful valet arrived with the agitated explanation that his master had no clean dress shirt. Everything had been packed and sent to the Bers' house. A clean shirt was finally procured, and after another long wait the news came that Tolstoy was at the church.

The bridal party set out. Many people crowded the church which was brightly illuminated for the wedding. The priest in his sacerdotal headgear and vestments of heavy silver cloth met Tolstoy and his bride at the door and led them to the altar. Sonya's thin arms and shoulders emphasized her extreme youthfulness. Spectators whispered comments on it and on her weeping. Perhaps some said, as they did of Kitty in *Anna Karenina*: "What a darling the bride is, like a lamb decked for the slaughter." The beautiful Russian Orthodox ceremony, enhanced by the lovely music of the invisible choir that harmoniously filled the church from the windows to the vaulted roof, lasted a long time. After the marriage the party drove back to the bride's house where guests were provided with a bountiful repast and much champagne.

The new *dormeuse* (sleeping carriage) that Tolstoy had bought for the occasion was waiting outside. He was impatient to be off for Yasnaya Polyana. The tearful farewells between Sonya and her family were painfully prolonged. Finally, tearing herself away with difficulty from her sobbing mother, Sonya entered the carriage and they began their journey. Burying herself in a corner, the bride, worn out from weariness and grief, did not cease to weep. Tolstoy was a bit hurt. An orphan for most of his life, he found it difficult to understand Sonya's copious tears on parting from her loved ones. He wrote cryptically of that night in the diary: "She is weepy. In the carriage. She knows everything, it is simple."<sup>41</sup>

On the evening of the next day they arrived at Yasnaya Polyana. Tolstoy's brother Sergei welcomed them with the traditional hospitality of bread and salt and Auntie Tatyana with an icon of the Virgin. Bride and groom bowed, kissed the image and then Auntie Tatyana. Their long and eventful life together at Yasnaya Polyana had begun, and under the most auspicious circumstances. For the next day Tolstoy jotted down in his diary: "Incredible happiness! . . . It cannot be that all this will cease when life ends."<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup>*Dnevnik*, September 20-24, 1862; original.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, September 25, 1862; original.

# Count Witte

BY MARK ALDANOV

**N**OT long before his death, Count Witte expressed the desire that there be erected over his grave "a simple black cross on a black pedestal on which should be engraved: 'Count Witte. October 17, 1905.'" "Do you think," he asked one of his friends, "such an inscription would be permitted?"

As is well known, on the seventeenth of October, 1905, Emperor Nicholas II signed a manifesto which proclaimed Russia a constitutional monarchy. This manifesto had been recommended by Count Witte and was signed at his insistence.

This famous Russian statesman, Sergei Yulievich Witte, was born June 17, 1849, in Tiflis. His family, though noble, was not wealthy; his father was Director of the Department of State Domains of the Caucasus. After graduating from the University of Odessa, where he had majored in physics and mathematics, Witte entered the employ of a private railroad, and though he had not specialized in engineering, he won rapid promotion and attained an important and highly paid position.

Chance, however, was soon to open the way for his brilliant career in the service of the State. Emperor Alexander III was travelling to Odessa. The enormous train, made up of the cars of the Tsar and his suite, was to pass over a branch of the railroad administered by Witte. According to schedule, the train was running at an uncommonly high speed, which Witte considered dangerous in view of the imperfect condition of the track and the tremendous weight of the train. Accordingly, on his own authority, he gave orders to reduce the speed. Irritated, the Tsar reprimanded him sharply, and the Minister of Transportation, Posiet, who was accompanying the Tsar, added his own reproof, pointing out that on other railroads the train had gone much faster. Undaunted by the presence of Alexander III, Witte answered Posiet in a loud voice, "Your Excellency, let others do as they wish, but I do not want to break the Tsar's neck, and in the end this is precisely what your course will lead to." The Emperor remained silent. But the Tsar's suite thought this retort of a mere civilian railway official highly impertinent. A few weeks later, however, Witte's prediction was to be grimly recalled. The imperial train suffered a terrible wreck, and Alexander III only narrowly escaped death. He remembered the words of the insolent railway employee and decided to transfer him to government service. Four years later, Witte was appointed Minister of Transportation. Such rapid advancement was considered fantastic at that time, particularly

in the case of "a nobody," "someone by the name of Witte," "a former employee of a private railroad!"

Witte remained in that post for only a few months. It was the Department of Finance which tempted him. In August, 1892, he was appointed Minister of Finance, and he held that office for eleven years, also an unprecedented attainment. There was no office of Prime Minister in Russia, and the Ministry of Finance was considered one of the three most important departments in the government. Witte completely reorganized Russian finance and carried out not a few significant reforms. During the entire period of his office the national budget never suffered a deficit; on the contrary, the revenues always exceeded the expenditures. Moreover, the budget itself increased twofold: from 965 million roubles in 1892 to 1,800 millions in 1901. It was during Witte's administration that the great Trans-Siberian Railroad was built; a railroad tariff was introduced, one of the most progressive in Europe (the Bolshevik historian Pokrovsky points out that Witte made long-distance travel by train possible even for the poor); three huge polytechnic institutes were constructed at Kiev, Warsaw, and St. Petersburg, the latter perhaps the most magnificent on the European continent.

Was he popular, this seemingly irremovable Minister of Finance? In any case, society regarded him as different from the usual run of ministers. He was known to be exceptionally able, but he was a harsh man and his tongue was biting. Doubtless he did not always speak out the truth boldly—nature does not create such paragons—but his veracity was greater than is to be expected of high officials. Many a sharp word was uttered by him or ascribed to him, and his enemies were numerous. It was widely rumored that he was disliked in court circles, where he was considered a plebeian. However, this is difficult to understand since Witte was of noble origin; for, on his mother's side (Fadeev) he was related to the princes Dolgoruky, one of the oldest families of the aristocracy. Furthermore, during the reigns of the last Tsars, there had been not a few people at court without family background. Witte was married to a divorcée of Jewish extraction, but this too was of little importance, as Alexander III had given his consent to this marriage. Only too often and too clearly did Witte express his scorn for idle society—he who had worked all his life like an ox. There was something challenging, unpolished, and unsocial in his huge, awkward, and bear-like appearance.

Abroad, Witte was known and esteemed. The aging Prince Bismarck's attention had been attracted to this outstanding man, and shortly before his death he said to Maximilian Harden: "You will see, this man will have a brilliant political career." Witte never met Bismarck, but he knew almost every other great man in Europe. No one in Russia had such a wide and varied circle of acquaintances. He had "friends" in the most unexpected places. But—his enemies were more influential than his friends.



In 1903, Witte's bitter disagreements with the reactionary statesmen grew more and more frequent until, as was said at the time, "he fell upstairs"—he was appointed Chairman of the Committee of Ministers. This was an honorary sinecure which did not carry the responsibilities of the post of Prime Minister. Two years later, however, after the unsuccessful war with Japan, the Tsar recalled him into active service in order to negotiate the peace with Japan. President Theodore Roosevelt offered to mediate. His offer was accepted, and Witte was sent to Portsmouth. There the peace was signed, the terms of which were not nearly so harsh as had been feared in view of Russia's defeat. The Tsar showed his gratitude for this achievement by conferring upon Witte the title of count. One of the terms of the Portsmouth treaty was that Russia was to forfeit half the island of Sakhalin to Japan. Referring to the fact that criminals were exiled to Sakhalin, Witte's enemies called him "Count Sakhalinsky," or "Count Half-Sakhalinsky."

When the revolution of 1905 broke out, Count Witte was appointed head of the Tsar's government. As the Manifesto of the seventeenth of October was published at his insistence, he can rightly be considered the parent of the short-lived Russian constitution. I vividly recall those times. Witte was now reviled equally by the Left and the Right. The Right considered that he had unnecessarily renounced autocracy. On October 18, one reactionary newspaper concluded its announcement of the Manifesto with the opening words of the national anthem, "God Save the Tsar," which could be variously interpreted, but the implication was obvious to everyone. The revolutionists abused Witte for having conceded almost nothing to the people and for having quickly taken back, in practice, even that little. Even the moderate groups distrusted him now: "He is too sly . . ." "One never knows what he's after. . . ." "No one knows on whose side he is, nor what master he serves." There was not one newspaper editorial which defended him or his policies at the time; above all, the Tsar was highly displeased with him. Count Witte is the only minister in Russian history who was endangered by the terroristic acts of both the Left and the Right. In fact, attempts were made upon his life even after he withdrew from active service.

Witte's retirement evoked widespread rejoicing as spontaneous as it was shortsighted. In his letter of resignation to the Tsar he wrote, and with good cause: "For six months I have been subjected to the abuse of all members of Russian society who can shout or scribble." Witte was never to return to power, but rumors that he would persisted to the very day of his death. It was said he did everything possible to be recalled, that he even solicited the aid of Rasputin. This last has never been proved, but it is quite possible, for Witte was highly ambitious and had a taste for intrigue.

During the years of his disfavor, Witte lived abroad for the most part. There he wrote his memoirs, which appeared in three volumes several years

after his death. These memoirs<sup>1</sup> are of great interest. He was not always just, but his opinions and observations were always penetrating. He despised the majority of people, and in appraising them he completely disregarded rank or social position, criticising equally royalty and commoners—for the clever were clever, and the stupid were stupid. Politicians, even the cleverest, are so conditioned by their stereotyped mode of life that it is difficult for them to think or write in any but stencilled patterns—Left, Right, Moderate. Only a few, one feels, think independently. To these few belonged Witte. His style shows this, for, although homely, it was intensely personal and original. Every phrase of Witte's can be immediately recognized, and that certainly cannot be said of many politicians who write.

With the years, Witte's gloom became intensified, and he repeatedly warned that the Tsar's régime, and with it Russia, was headed for catastrophe. He recognized in the World War the beginning of the disaster soon to come. At the time many people mistakenly considered him a Germanophile; in reality he was "100 per cent for defense," and there is absolutely no reason to doubt his sincere patriotism. In private conversation, he reviled Wilhelm II in most abusive terms, but he openly expressed his conviction that the war of 1914 was suicidal for Europe and its consequences impossible to imagine.

The last months of this man were spent in complete dejection. "He was constantly depressed," wrote a friend in an obituary article.<sup>2</sup> His utterances were filled with bitterness and sarcasm and the premonition of approaching death never left him. During his morning drive on "The Islands"<sup>3</sup> he habitually stopped at the Chapel of the Saviour to pray. What did he pray for—the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation of Russia? Count Witte died on February 28, 1915, in St. Petersburg. He was buried in the Alexandro-Nevisky monastery. I was present at his funeral, at which there gathered, probably for the last time in history, all the dignitaries of old Russia.

A Russian Turgot? Unquestionably. A great minister? There is no doubt of it. But there have been many outstanding ministers. I dare recall Witte today because of two traits, or distinctive attitudes, which place him apart from the international statesmen of the epoch preceding the war of 1914–18. These attitudes are of special significance today.

"A black cross on a black pedestal. 'Count Witte. October 17, 1905.'"<sup>4</sup> The word "black" is perhaps not accidental. But the inscription on Witte's tombstone would lead one to think that Count Witte regarded his historic achievement with great satisfaction; in reality that was not the case. He

<sup>1</sup>Graf S. Yu. Witte, *Vospominaniya* (Memoirs), Berlin, 1922–23.

<sup>2</sup>B. B. Glinsky, "Graf S. Yu. Witte v poslednie mesyatsy zhizni," *Istoricheskii Vestnik*, December, 1915, p. 907.

<sup>3</sup>A favorite drive of the St. Petersburg élite.

was assailed by doubts concerning the Manifesto, especially in his moments of depression. "Few people know," writes one who knew him well, "that Count Sergei Yulievich Witte regarded the Manifesto of October 17, without enthusiasm, even with considerable misgivings." Those who had considered the Manifesto the palladium of Russian statesmanship were astounded by Witte's cold and skeptical attitude towards it. "Is it possible," he used to ask, "that it was a mistake? But if it was, then not only I but all mankind was mistaken."<sup>4</sup>

Count Witte had no faith in autocracy or parliamentarism, democracy or dictatorship. He was not interested in political theories; nor, in general, was he a theoretician. Upon occasion he was even criticised for his lack of erudition and more particularly for his indifferent knowledge of the state law. Indeed, his "scientific" works were few and not very interesting, such as his pamphlet on the economist List—written God alone knows for whom or for what purpose. But his innate intelligence was great, and his knowledge of statesmanship and of life in general was exceptional. He possessed the rare ability to look independently upon life and people, uninfluenced by preconceived ideas and opinions. His intelligence and vast experience made him aware (perhaps he sensed rather than knew) that all was not well, not with Russia alone, but with the entire world. He was conscious that everywhere there was need for a synthesis, as yet not realized, but perhaps possible—a synthesis of individual freedom and strong government.

Today, a quarter of a century after his death, many things are clearer to us. Parliamentarism has allowed itself to be destroyed in the great majority of countries: in France the system collapsed as a result of her military defeat, for which it was partially though not wholly to blame; in some countries, even in peace-time, its failure was a consequence of preceding wars; in other countries it fell beneath the blows of military, semi-military and even civil uprisings; and elsewhere its destruction was the result of the improper functioning of systems based upon what was supposed to be "the most perfect republican constitution the world has ever known," as in the case of Germany. In each of these countries, many disillusioned democratic leaders laid the blame on the rise of brutal forces, the ignorance of the masses, and the faults of political leaders other than themselves. Scarcely one, in any memoirs published to date, has admitted his own mistakes. Whatever one's attitude may be, it cannot be denied that in the majority of countries the most accepted and widespread form of democracy has collapsed. Count Witte did not live to witness the downfall of the continental democracies, but he had long anticipated it. Today the whole world is experiencing "the delights" of the totalitarian order whose inevitable complement is war; yet, from Witte's viewpoint, nothing could have been or

<sup>4</sup>Witte's conversation with A. V. Rumanov, *Istoricheskii Vestnik*, November, 1915, p. 609.

could ever be as repulsive as Hitlerism. "My husband," writes Countess Witte, "often said to his friends: 'I am neither a liberal nor a conservative, I am simply a civilized man. I can't exile a man to Siberia just because he doesn't think as I do, nor can I take away his civil rights because he doesn't worship God in the same church as I.'"<sup>5</sup> In his memoirs Witte says: "One might say, speaking generally, that the scoundrels in the parties of the Left are scoundrels with principles, with convictions, whose actions do not spring from greed or baseness. But it seems that in all the world, or at any rate in Russia, the politicians of the Right<sup>6</sup> are scoundrels who become rightists ostensibly through high conservative principles, but who, in reality, pursue exclusively their own personal ends."<sup>7</sup>

Witte never found the synthesis he sought—just as we, today, have failed as yet to find it. Again and again he pointed out the symptoms of the ailing democracies: the endless game of leapfrog played by the statesmen in many of the parliamentary countries, and the resulting paralysis of the government and its machinery; the absence of clear distinctions between the freedom of the press and the freedom to libel and blackmail. He diagnosed the symptoms but he never offered a cure. Half-jokingly, half-seriously, he would say: "In my heart I am for autocracy, but in my mind, for the constitution." Though these words appear politically meaningless, it would seem that he had always cherished a naïve hope for some wise and highly civilized autocrat. This day-dream he carried with him to his death.

This attitude of Witte's is psychologically, if not logically, connected with another which distinguished him from his contemporary statesmen just as sharply: his profound, overpowering hatred of war, of any war, under any pretext, or for whatever cause. Since the events of 1914-18, the desire for peace has grown much stronger throughout the world. Yet Witte, who did not live to experience the terrible, objective lesson of those years, wrote in his memoirs: "The principal merit of Emperor Alexander III was that during the thirteen years of his reign there was not a single war, save the minor Acheltek expedition."<sup>8</sup> In Witte's time, as in the preceding epoch, there were only few who thought as he did.

Canning once said, "I do not fear war if it be for a just cause!" I do not consider this statement of the British minister erroneous or careless. Today, through bitter experience, we know that sometimes there is no other solution than war for a just cause. I am now concerned with the unquestionable fact that Count Witte considered all the wars of his time sheer madness. Here, obviously, there is no necessity to speak further of people of Bismarck's, or even of Joseph Chamberlain's type. But let us remember

<sup>5</sup>Witte, *Vospominaniya*, Preface by Countess M. I. Witte, p. xxxiii.

<sup>6</sup>Here Witte had in mind the so-called "black hundred," extremists of the Hitler-Himmler-Streicher type.

<sup>7</sup>Witte, *Vospominaniya*, I, 255.

<sup>8</sup>Witte, *Vospominaniya*, I, 370.

the much less imperialistic among Witte's contemporaries in Western Europe: Bülow, Bethmann-Hollweg, Salisbury, Milner, Ferry, Delcassé, Poincaré, Czernin, Tisza, Crispi. Unlike any of them, Witte could not be approached with any such merchandise as war, no matter what its wrappings or its labels. Russia, too, had her imperialistic designs, but Witte laughed at them scornfully: "What nonsense! We have no need for anything but peace and social development, nor should any one want more." As a Russian statesman, Witte felt with particular keenness the absurdity of all plans for conquest, the yearning for markets, bases, sea outlets, etc. For Russia, with her vast territory and her inexhaustible natural resources, slogans disguising a bloody and expensive war were altogether meaningless. To fight for a market! To expend a million in order to gain fifty kopecks!

Explanations of the causes of wars based on the doctrine of economic materialism, in general neither valuable nor convincing, are especially inadequate when applied to Russia. Count Witte considered the war with Japan a mad and criminal undertaking. After the occupation of Port Arthur by the Russians, he said to the Tsar: "Your Imperial Majesty, you will remember *today*. You will see what terrible consequences for Russia this fatal step will have."<sup>9</sup> The responsibility for the war with Germany did not fall upon Russia. Witte considered that war as one does the plague; it did not matter who was responsible.

He was not a man of learning, yet he had a great, one might say a touching, admiration for the erudition of others. In his memoirs "a highly educated man," "a man of great learning," was the highest praise he could bestow on anyone. And as every page of his memoirs testifies, he had a passionate admiration for culture in all its manifestations, perhaps especially in its material manifestations, such as the railroads and the polytechnic institutes that were so dear to his heart. Wars, he felt, would destroy all that, especially modern wars with their extraordinary perfection of the techniques of destruction. Count Witte despised all militaristic politicians. This was one of the reasons for his hatred of Plevhe, who advocated "the small war essential for the strengthening of the régime." This, likewise, was the reason for his profound distrust of William II.

In 1938, at the height of Neville Chamberlain's fame and "success," at the time of "the umbrella" and the "peace in our time," when the late British Prime Minister proposed the project of a universal appeasement based on a close understanding between France, Great Britain, Germany, and Italy, T. C. Wilson published a pamphlet<sup>10</sup> in which he pointed out that a similar plan had been offered, in his time, by the Russian minister Count Witte. Wilson highly approved of both Witte and Chamberlain. But I must say that the linking of these two names does not seem to me to be either flat-

<sup>9</sup>Witte, *Vospominaniya*, I, 123.

<sup>10</sup>T. C. Wilson, *Background for Chamberlain*, Philadelphia, 1938.



tering or just to Witte. The similarity is not only slight but also superficial: Witte's first consideration was Russia, which had no place at all in Chamberlain's project; and, moreover, the world situation has been completely altered since Witte's time by Hitler's rise to power.

Witte's plan for universal peace, which has been compared to that of Munich, was presented in 1897. William II at that time had suddenly conceived one of his precious ideas—that all the evils of the world emanated from the United States. The German Emperor made a trip to Russia, to Peterhof, presumably for the purpose of promulgating this idea. In order to win Witte over to his side, he conferred upon him an exceptionally high honor, the Order of the Black Eagle, which was usually bestowed only upon monarchs and ministers of foreign affairs, and Witte, though at the peak of his power, was merely a minister of finance. William II had a frank discussion with him, in the course of which the Emperor stated his conviction that all Europe must unite at once for an economic struggle with the United States. One can imagine Witte's stupefaction. He answered that he saw not the slightest necessity for fighting America, with whom Russia had always been on the most friendly terms. But he told the Emperor that a union of European states was long overdue and that it was time to stop the armament race, which promised nothing but evil and would bring ruin upon all European nations. If this race were to continue, Europe would inevitably lose its predominant position in the world, which it had maintained for a thousand years. "The time is near when Europe will be regarded only with the respect which well-bred people show former beauties who have grown so decrepit they can scarcely move about." Now it was William II who was confounded. Much more coldly, one imagines, he asked Witte what solution, then, had he to offer. Witte replied that he proposed a general agreement among nations to create out of the whole of Europe something in the nature of a single empire. This put an end to the conversation. It was impossible for the German Emperor to consider such a proposal seriously. Obviously, this meeting between the German Emperor and Witte bears little resemblance to what took place at Munich.

This man, whose death marked the close of a great Russian historical tradition, a liberal tradition which had originated in the nineteenth century with Speransky, was in many respects far ahead of his time. I do not wish to imply, certainly, that, in a higher historical sense, it was for this reason alone that Witte may be considered to have failed. There were many reasons for his failure, and some of them were rooted in his complex and difficult character. Not of little importance was the fact that by nature he was unsuited for the rôle of the leading minister under Emperor Nicholas II.

The relationship between Witte and the Tsar could furnish a theme for a separate article. I shall merely touch upon it. At first the Emperor was greatly disposed towards Witte, as he was, in general, friendly to all those

who had been advanced by his father. It suffices to point out that Witte served eight of his eleven years as minister of finance during the reign of Nicholas II. The Tsar had conferred upon him the title of Count, an honor which he rarely bestowed—in fact, more sparingly than any preceding Tsar. Gradually the Tsar's good-will changed to unfriendliness, and eventually to hatred. In his letter of February 28, 1915, to the Tsarina, the day of Witte's death, the Tsar wrote: "Although I am naturally very sad to leave you and the dear children, this time I am leaving with such peace of mind that I myself am surprised. Whether it is because of my last night's discourse with our Friend, or the newspaper which Buchanan gave me, or *Witte's death*, or perhaps a feeling that something good is about to happen at the front, I cannot say; but in my heart reigns a truly Easter-like peace. I wish so much that I could leave it with you."<sup>11</sup> The words emphasized here stand out sharply in the Emperor's correspondence, for he had never written in this manner of anyone. Witte had an equally intense dislike for the Emperor. Some of his references to Nicholas II are bitter in the extreme; and in all his characterizations of the Tsar, there is a concealed cold fury. He had not been permitted—the Tsar had not permitted him—to complete his historical mission!

I repeat that the Russian Turgot himself could scarcely have formulated what, precisely, his mission was. I do not wish to pronounce a judgment which may appear heretical; but I think that, even granted an Emperor of different disposition, a different régime, whether a strictly constitutional monarchy or a democratic republic, Russia could not have withstood the tornado of 1914-18. Was it possible to have avoided the war? Could Counte Witte have done it had he remained in power? It was not in Russia, or at any rate, not in Russia alone, that this issue was decided which was to determine for many years to come, perhaps for centuries, the future of mankind.

<sup>11</sup>Perepiska Nikolaya i Aleksandry Romanovykh (Correspondence between Nicholas and Alexandra Romanov), Moscow, 1923, part III, p. 126, No. 165.

# Patriotic Plays in Soviet Russia

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW DANA

A WAVE of patriotic drama has been sweeping through the theatres of the Soviet Union. During the last three years, historical films, plays, operas, and cantatas have given a new life to the heroic past of Russia. Soviet dramatists have been turning back to earlier periods of Russian history—a hundred years ago, two hundred years ago, even seven hundred years ago. The great national heroes of the old Russia—Alexander Nevsky, Minin and Pozharsky, Ivan Susanin, Peter the Great, Suvorov, Kutuzov—have all been brought to life again on the stages and screens of the new Russia. Every earlier menace of invasion, every earlier conflict with German aggressors has been revived and serves to strengthen the morale of the Russian people of today in their heroic resistance to the present German invasion.

It is particularly interesting to notice, however, that this recent tendency towards patriotic and military drama has not sprung up as a sudden change after the forces of Hitler attacked the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. On the contrary, this trend was already in force before and even during the two-year period of the non-aggression pact with Germany.

For example, in 1939, Eisenstein's film *Alexander Nevsky* went back to a period seven centuries ago when the early Russians were resisting the attempt of the German Knights to conquer them. Prokofiev's symphonic cantata on the same subject, in seven parts with solos, chorus, and orchestra, was first performed in November, 1939, some three months after the non-aggression pact had been signed. In both film and cantata Russia is represented as being menaced by war on two fronts: by the Tartars from the East and by the Teutonic Knights from the West. Alexander appeals to the mighty masses of Russians to repulse the invasion, crying: "Rise up, good people!" The popular Russian heroes, Vasili Buslai and Gavril Oleksich, vie with each other in deeds of valor as they wield their heavy battle axes against the attacking German forces. It has not been this recent sympathetic treatment of these old Russian titans, but Demyan Bedny's earlier ill-timed attempt to ridicule them in his *Bogatyyi*, that met the disapproval of the Soviet Committee on Art. These were names dear to the hearts of all sons of Mother Russia, and the battle today is one with the battle they fought long ago. The great "Battle on the Ice," fought at Lake Peipus in 1242, ended ultimately in the triumph of the Russians. The German army bogged down under its own weight in the snows of Russia and surrendered. Alex-

ander Nevsky, in sending the captives back to Germany, said to them: "Go home and tell all in foreign lands that Russia lives. Let them come to us as friends and we will receive them as friends; but if they come against us with arms, they will perish by arms. On this the Russian land stands and will stand!" His voice comes thundering through seven centuries to stir into action those who are defending Russia today.

While the composer Prokofiev, now with a harsh blare of battle trumpets and now with choruses of broad themes harmonized, has been composing music for his cantata, *Alexander Nevsky*, his fellow-composer, Shostakovich, has been orchestrating and completing Musorgsky's original score for *Boris Godunov*, dealing with a somewhat later period of Russian history. Shostakovich writes that in the mornings he has been digging on the trenches to help defend besieged Leningrad from capture and at night has been working either on this old opera or on a new symphony of his own to be called "The Defense of Leningrad."

From the so-called Time of Troubles, after the death of Boris Godunov, come two other legendary glories of Russian history that have been given a new lease of life in the present crisis. One, *Minin and Pozharsky*, the story of the butcher and the nobleman, who in 1612 led an army of peasants and noblemen, fighting side by side singing, to drive the invading Poles out of Russia, has been the subject of a new opera by Asafiev and a new film by Pudovkin, both produced in 1939, and both serving today to stimulate the present defenders of Russia against invasion. The bronze statue of Minin and Pozharsky still stands in the Red Square in Moscow as a reminder of the strength of that united Russia three hundred years and more ago.

From the following year, 1613, comes the other story—that of the peasant, Ivan Susanin, who led the invaders astray and allowed himself to be tortured to death, rather than betray Russia. During these last two years since 1939, under its original title of *Ivan Susanin*, Glinka's stirring opera of over a hundred years ago has been revived with great success, both at the Bolshoy Theatre in Moscow and at the Mariinsky Theatre in Leningrad. In the superb final scene, Moscow and the Kremlin are throbbing with bells and guns and the chorus of voices and the chimes of bells comes singing and ringing across the years to stir the citizens of Moscow once again to the highest pitch of patriotism.

From a century later comes Peter the Great, who in novel and play and film seems during the last few years to be enjoying an ever-growing popularity. Aleksei Tolstoy's long novel *Peter the Great*, as recently as March, 1941, was awarded 100,000 rubles as one of the three greatest prose works of the last few years. The novel has been dramatized into a powerful play and into a series of rich, raw, and racy films. A Tsar need no longer be the villain, but may be the hero of the play, when he is shown to have helped in the enlightenment of his people, to have laid the foundations of a city that

was to be a "Window upon Europe," glad to let in through that window the light of culture from the West, and yet, at the same time, building up the fortifications of St. Petersburg and constructing a Russian navy for defense against any armed invasion from that same West. The gigantic figure of Peter striding along the dikes on the banks of the Neva in the midst of storm and flood and gazing towards the West with admiration and yet with admonition, serves to inspire today the defenders of the city that he founded.

Passing from the time of Peter the Great to that of Catherine the Great, we come to the greatest Russian military hero of them all, Suvorov. The play by Bakhterev and Razumovsky called *The Army Leader Suvorov* was first produced in the Red Army Theatre in Moscow on February 23, 1940, and the film by Pudovkin called *Suvorov* was first released in January, 1941, both in the very midst of the period of the non-aggression pact between Germany and Russia, and yet both serving to prepare the Russians against any attacks from the Germans. The play begins with a Prologue entitled "The Young Officer" in which Suvorov is represented in his youth as having entered the city of Berlin with his soldiers in 1760, at the time when Frederick the Great of Prussia was at the height of his glory as the greatest military leader of his age—an episode which the Germans like to forget. When some of the Germans in the play try to flatter Suvorov by asking him to dine with them, he characteristically seizes a ladle and, rushing out, cries: "I am a soldier and I am going to eat porridge with the soldiers." After a puny and frail childhood, he enters the army as a private soldier, and his body becomes hardened by arduous campaigns into a fiery and wiry strength. He has gradually risen from the ranks, yet his heart remains with the common soldiers. In battle he dresses as one of them and mingles with them in the thick of the fight. He vigorously insists on humane treatment for the common soldier. He promotes men from the rank and file, rather than from the aristocracy, to be officers. For his eccentricities, for his choleric temper, and for his caustic verses against those in power, he is hated and despised by the courtiers and by the generals; but for his witty and friendly talks with his fellow-soldiers, he is beloved and admired by them and by the common people. "I do not *drive* my men into battle," he explains, "I lead them." Often it is the soldiers themselves who urge him to lead them to the attack. Instead of saying, like a Napoleon, "I will conquer," he says "We will conquer." He explains that his soldiers are not mere cogs in a machine, but human beings. He himself teaches them mathematics and makes clear to them the cause and the conduct of the war. Theirs is to reason why. As Suvorov says: "Every soldier must know what he is fighting for. A soldier who knows that, is worth three soldiers who do not know." His ideal is "an army in which every man is a commander."

The play goes on with a series of brilliant scenes depicting episodes in Suvorov's career. Under cover of darkness, he storms the citadel of Izmail



at the mouth of the Danube; and as the first streak of dawn appears, stands a-tip-toe in triumph, imitating the crowing of a cock, till one by one far-off roosters from surrounding farms echo his call. Later, in the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, the Tsar Paul would have Suvorov use German military tactics and German uniforms. Suvorov retorts that he has only seen those uniforms on the backs of Germans running away from him. "I am not a German, but a Russian born and bred," he cries; and he boasts: "Frederick the Great has lost battles, but I have never been defeated!" The army books prescribe that he should lead his army "around any forest that lies in his path"; but he defies the books and leads his soldiers through the forests, for this is quicker and gives them better cover. When the strategists say he ought to retreat, he insists on advancing. Even his enemies gave to General Suvorov the well-deserved nickname "General Advance." In his rapid and unexpected advances, he anticipated the present day mobile warfare, as contrasted with the warfare of position. In place of the usual stodgy book on *The Science of Strategy*, he wrote a book audaciously called *The Science of Victory*.

For his insubordination and his insolence, the "royal reward" was exile; but before long he is needed again at the front and he is recalled, to the great joy of the soldiers. Under the hot Italian sun he fights with the French armies which were then invading Italy. Unlike the other army leaders, he realizes that there are moments when battles should not be fought according to the rules. He cries—and his words come down to the Russian soldiers who are fighting today: "There are moments when men are inspired, when human courage and human will can sweep anything before them. At such moments man shines with celestial light and is capable of performing miracles. For such moments as these, it is worth living. Generations to come will marvel at the deeds of which our Russians are capable!"

Suvorov was the first general to lead a Russian army across the Alps. As he led them up the mountainside in Switzerland, he told his soldiers to "conquer mountains as though they were hills." At "The Devil's Bridge," the stone arch, by which his soldiers were about to cross a deep ravine, was suddenly blown up; but he made a new bridge from the logs of a nearby hut, binding them together with his officer's sash, and on this narrow catwalk his soldiers crawled across to the other side of the ravine. Wounded and driven back in battle on one day, he attacked and was wounded again the next day, but, stomping along on his cane, led his troops finally to a complete victory.

Towards the end of his life, thin and pale and invalid, Suvorov was like a voice crying in the wilderness to warn his fellow-countrymen of the growing menace of a foreign upstart corporal who had already occupied the Netherlands and other countries. He turns to his young comrade-in-arms,

Kutuzov, and says: "Napoleon will soon begin to threaten Russia." In spite of the fact that the aggressor seemed to be everywhere successful, Suvorov refused to believe, as some timid souls were saying, that the aggressor could never be stopped. He said to Kutuzov: "Napoleon must be stopped before it is too late. It is time someone taught him a lesson. You must be the one to do it. Russia will be the grave of Napoleon. . . . I am old—very old. Should our Fatherland be in danger—should the enemy seek to encroach on our soil—you must rise to her defense. The people will be grateful and the gratitude of the people is the highest reward!"

Suvorov himself sought no other reward. He wishes only that his feeble life might go on, so that he might help defend his country. In the final scene of the play, in 1800, Suvorov is on his death bed and the play ends with his dying challenge: "You can tell the French and you can tell the Germans that Suvorov lives! You hear? He lives! He lives in every Russian warrior, in every Russian soldier. Suvorov is not dead! Do you hear? Suvorov is not dead!"

As these words rang through the enormous auditorium of the new Red Army Theatre in Moscow, when the play was first performed there on February 23, 1940, the masses of Red Army men gathered there heard that cry. Night after night they hear it there again. At Smolensk, "the gateway to Moscow," towards which the Germans were advancing, this same ringing message from Suvorov came night after night from the stage of the theatre into the dark and crowded auditorium, up to the time when the Germans captured the city last July. The play is spreading, however, to other cities and other theatres and being greeted everywhere with great enthusiasm. A production of it has been planned by the Moscow Art Theatre itself.

Some twelve years after Suvorov's death, came Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812, and it was Kutuzov's turn to take up the gauntlet. That heroic and prophetic moment in Russian history of more than a century ago has a thrilling significance in the similar crisis today. In 1940 the hundredth anniversary of Chaikovsky's birth, his thrilling "1812 Overture" was heard resounding everywhere through the Soviet Union. In 1941 the hundredth anniversary of Lermontov's birth, his heroic poem "Borodino" is now reverberating once more through the length and breadth of Russia. Tolstoy's monumental novel *War and Peace*, with its epic treatment of that whole era, has been dramatized into a long play that will take two successive nights to perform at the Maly Theatre in Moscow. An opera called *Kutuzov* has been composed by Kachurov, and a play written in verse by Soloviev and called *Fieldmarshal Kutuzov* was first produced at the Vakhtangov Theatre in Moscow on December 20, 1939, some six months after the non-aggression pact with Germany.

Soloviev's play begins with a scene in the palace at Vilna, where Napoleon is represented as a ruthless aggressor, who has promised to "free" each of

the countries which he has in turn invaded and is now planning to "free" Russia. The invasion began on June 24, curiously close to the date chosen by Hitler for the beginning of his attack. In a scene representing the Battle of Borodino, the brilliant Russian general Bagration is mortally wounded, but is being carried into battle on a stretcher, held high over the soldiers' heads and, in dying, cries out to the Russians: "Soldiers! Let us give up our lives, but let us never give up our Fatherland!"

Denis Davydov, with a few followers, offers to go behind the enemy's lines and with the Russian peasants that he finds there, form partisan bands to harass the invaders from the rear—tactics in which the Russians are extraordinarily adroit today. The peasants burn their own villages rather than have them fall into the hands of the invaders, thus giving us a foretaste of Russia's present "scorched-earth" policy. Kutuzov is even willing to give up Moscow and let it be burned, in order to save his army and thereby save Russia. "He who is unwilling to sacrifice what is smaller, can only have small care for that which is greater."

Like Suvorov before him, Kutuzov is chosen as commander-in-chief, not so much by the Tsar and the army leaders, as by the unanimous voice of the common soldiers and the common people themselves. Instead of always advancing like Suvorov, however, he realizes that there are times when it may be necessary to make a strategic retreat. Other times, other tactics. Napoleon called him "The Old Fox of the North," and the fox knows how to save its tail, how to save the Russian army by hiding it in the thick of the forest. The fox knows how to lead the lion, Napoleon himself, into the trap. When Kutuzov's little grandson asks him whether he will be able to beat Napoleon, Kutuzov answers that he may not be able to beat him, but he hopes that he will be able to outwit him. He knows that the farther the invading forces are drawn from their own home, the weaker will be their strength. As he says: "Russia will absorb its enemy like a sponge."

This Fabian policy naturally makes Kutuzov vulnerable to the criticism of jealous rival generals and to the charge of being a coward. Though his policy is now opposite to that of Suvorov, like Suvorov he is bitterly denounced by those in power. His faith, however, is not in them but in the Russian people. He says: "Sometimes the simple people grasp something which the generals themselves do not realize. I trust the bravery of you Russian soldiers. Once more the Fatherland puts its trust in you!"

As the play goes on, October comes. The snow begins to fall. Napoleon starts his long retreat from Moscow. Kutuzov can hold back the Russian people no longer. He says: "Can I tear the heart of the patriot out of its breast? Can I appease the hatred of the people who have seen the enemy attack their houses in the land that is dear to their hearts?" At last he lets loose the dogs of war. To those who say that the Russian soldiers need relaxation, he retorts: "Let them get their relaxation by driving out the

enemy!" This they do with a vengeance. In the long run the power of resistance has proved stronger than that of aggression. By retreating from those who are invading and by avoiding a pitched battle, he is now in a position to harry the rear guard and take a terrible toll from the would-be invaders. It is now that the tables are turned. Kutuzov, however, does not want to invade Europe, as Napoleon had. He is content with fighting a war of deliverance, a war of liberation.

Towards the end of the play, Napoleon, with more than ninety per cent of his Grand Army destroyed by bullets or typhus or cold, is forced to admit: "Though we thought the Russians stupid, they were really wise."

In the final scene of the play, Tsar Alexander I wants to offer Kutuzov a fitting reward for having ultimately driven out the invader, but Kutuzov, in dying, seeks for himself nothing of the military glory that Napoleon had sought. Wisdom, for him, is more important than glory. As he says: "Wisdom does not seek glory, but glory itself bows its head in reverence to wisdom."

This play, as directed by the brilliant young actor and director, Okhlopkov, was a tremendous success at the Vakhtangov Theatre in Moscow. That theatre was the one nearest to the Smolensk Market Place and thus nearest to the town of Smolensk, from which the German bombers were flying during the summer of 1941 to drop bombs on Moscow. The play continued to be acted there until July, when a German bomb completely destroyed the beautiful new building of the Vakhtangov Theatre. The play, however, has been taken up by other Moscow theatres. If Moscow should fall, there is no doubt that this play on Kutuzov will be acted from Moscow to the Urals and from the Urals to Vladivostok.

This splendid series of Russian military leaders—Alexander Nevsky, Minin and Pozharsky, Peter the Great, Suvorov, Kutuzov—extending from seven hundred years ago to a century ago, has been continued by a series of Soviet plays and films about the military leaders of the Russian Revolution and the Russian Civil War—the Red Army leader Chapaev, the Ukrainian fighter Shchors, and the Red Cavalry Commander Parkhomenko—who have carried on the tradition of Russian courage. Together the long list offers an inspiring gallery of heroic national figures.

This recent tendency to view the earlier Russian history from a patriotic point of view has been only a rather gradual growth during the quarter-century of Russian drama. Immediately after the Russian Revolution of 1917, it was natural that the new plays should deal with revolutionary subjects. During the first eight years of Soviet drama, there were many plays about historical revolutions of other ages and other countries, which served as prototypes of the Revolution in Russia. Thus, in 1925 there was a play about a revolt in ancient Babylon called *Zagmuk*; in 1923, a play about the revolt of the slaves in ancient Rome called *Spartacus*; in 1922, a play

about the early uprising in England called *Wat Tyler*; and in 1921, a play called *Cromwell*, dealing with the Puritan Revolution and the beheading of Charles I; and throughout the 1920's, a number of plays dealing with the French Revolution and the Paris Commune.

During these early years in the Soviet theatres, there were also many plays about revolutionary movements in past Russian history. Beginning with plays about the futile revolts under individual outlaws in the 17th and 18th centuries, such as the plays *Stenka Razin* in 1923 and *Pugachev* in 1924, they reach the revolutionary groups of intellectuals in the nineteenth century, such as *The Decembrists* and *Nicholas I* in 1925, or the play in 1924 about the five revolutionists executed at the time of the assassination of Alexander II, and finally the mass revolutions of the twentieth century. Plays dealing with the unsuccessful Revolution of 1905 were performed on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary in 1925, and innumerable plays dealing with the triumphant October Revolution of 1917 were acted in practically every theatre of the Soviet Union at the time of the tenth anniversary in 1927. Taken together, these plays on the various Russian revolutions make a most interesting survey of Russian history, even if they are from a somewhat one-sided revolutionary point of view. They furnish a fruitful study of what might be called "the evolution of Revolution."

To this earlier series of revolutionary plays there have now been added, after some twenty years, this new series of patriotic plays that have sprung up during the last two or three years, which go back over Russian history, with a somewhat different pattern, picking out now certain patriotic and military heroes that they had neglected before. These revolutionary heroes and military leaders form in combination a better-rounded and more mature conception of Russian history than either conception would have given us by itself. In these two sets of plays, the workers in Russia find on the one hand heroes that have risen from their own class, and on the other hand heroes that have come from their own race. In this way a spirit of national loyalty is combined with a spirit of class loyalty, and the morale of the people is doubly reinforced.

In *The Theatre of the People*, Romain Rolland has said: "The people need a theatre in which they will recognize themselves and admire their past. The performances must rouse in them love for what is great and fortify their will to do great things." The recent wave of patriotic plays in the Soviet theatres offers to the Russian people just such an opportunity to see what has been noblest in past Russian history and to realize the rôle that they will have to play in the present world.

In the present crisis, patriotic plays consist not merely of these chronicle plays about the old Russia, but also of plays contrasting life in the Soviet Union with life in Nazi Germany—plays showing how their ideology is diametrically opposed to that of the Nazis in their different attitude towards



race prejudice, towards labor, towards women, towards children, and towards culture itself. Beginning with the very year in which Hitler came into power, with Herman's *Prelude* and Vishnevsky's *Struggle in the West* of 1933, and Shestakov's *Mik* and Brustein's *To Be Continued* of 1934, there has been an unbroken series of anti-Nazi plays during the last eight years.

On the other hand, throughout the same period, the Soviet theatres have shown a most sympathetic treatment of English drama. For example, on the eve of the German invasion of June 22, 1941, three out of the five main Moscow theatres were acting Shakespearean plays. In the Red Army Theatre, on that midsummer night, Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* was acted. In its gigantic new building, shaped like a five-pointed star, the Red Army Theatre is able to put on a real cavalry charge across the stage in some of its military plays, or else to put on most lavish productions of Shakespeare and of the various earlier Russian dramatists. As Voroshilov, the head of the Red Army, has said: "Our Russian soldiers will fight all the better if they know and love the culture they are fighting to defend."

The Moscow Art Theatre, on that same night of June 21, showed the continuity of the old Russian culture with the new, by producing Chekhov's *Three Sisters*. The patriotism of the older actors of that theatre towards the new Russia can be felt in the recent letters they have written. Chekhov's widow, Olga Knipper-Chekhova, writes: "We actors and actresses in the Moscow Art Theatre are mobilizing the spirit of resistance and steadfastness of our people. We are hammering out the spiritual instrument of victory. We are filled with a great calm, for we know the unswerving and resolute spirit of the Russian people." The great actor Kachalov writes: "At this hour, we actors of Soviet Russia are heart and soul with the struggle being waged by our people. The hour is dark, but we know that it must end in victory. In the eternal words of our great poet Pushkin, we declare: 'Let the darkness disappear. Long live the sun!'"

# Latest Trends in Soviet Literature

BY HELEN ISWOLSKY

IT is extremely difficult to appreciate the true character of the works of Soviet authors and this difficulty is due to two facts, which every critic who wishes to be impartial has to face.

First, the link between Soviet literature and former Russian literary tradition has been almost completely severed. Scarcely any traces of the intellectual and spiritual preoccupations of the old school have survived the twenty-four years of the Bolshevik régime. Not only have form and style changed, but the content is entirely different.

Instead of the deep psychological introspection, the analysis of the most burning human problems, so typical of pre-revolutionary Russian writings, we have before us pictures of collective upheavals, of masses stirred by wars and gigantic struggles. In these tragic epics, in which an entire nation is engaged, there is little place for the individual, for the passions, joys, and sufferings of isolated souls.

The second difficulty is the greater and the more serious of the two. It is simply that Soviet literary production is not free. It is subjected to the rigid rules and prescriptions of Soviet Marxist ideology. Totalitarian dictatorship rules literature as it does all other branches of Soviet life.

Even in works which remain relatively independent the party line is continually felt. Thus, for instance, the *Poputchiki* (Fellow-travellers), a literary group formed at the beginning of the revolution which did not officially adhere to communism, have not entirely escaped communist influence. Literature in the U.S.S.R. must obey "social orders." It must comply with political slogans which naturally diminish its intrinsic value and check creative impulse.

Notwithstanding these special conditions, Soviet writers have produced a series of interesting and talented works, especially during the first fifteen years following the revolution. In those days thought and creation, though restricted, had not yet been definitely shackled. Russia was still throbbing with the emotions, sufferings, and struggles of what the writer Boris Pilnyak termed "the naked years."

Stalin had not yet leveled all intellectual life. It was but gradually that his official ideologists and censors succeeded in turning the literary field into a communist drilling ground. But even when this leveling was completed, certain Soviet authors still produced works of undeniable value; whilst externally complying with "social orders," they managed to preserve in their

novels and plays a strain of genuine human interest. Amongst these must be cited Mikhail Sholokhov, the author of *And Quiet Flows the Don*, Aleksei Tolstoy, who wrote the remarkable *Peter the Great*, A. Fadeiev, Valentin Kataev, Konstantin Fedin, Leonid Leonov, Yury Herman, Boris Pilnyak, etc.

Then came the purges of 1937. Intellectual circles underwent a ruthless "cleansing," hundreds of representatives of Soviet culture were executed or disgraced, and Bukharin himself, the U.S.S.R.'s former ideological leader, was tried as a traitor. From that moment the last vestiges of free creation were swept away, and cultural manifestations practically checked. The Union of Soviet Writers, the official professional society, became completely bureaucratized. It was now nothing more than a completely controlled state instrument. Literature went through a period of bleak and barren years. The monotony was relieved only by occasional congresses and professional meetings, at which Soviet officials issued new slogans designed to promote literary enthusiasm. But these slogans failed in their purpose, and stagnation persisted.

Even the most devout followers of Stalin's literary recipes now abstained from writing; if they attempted to do so, they received drastic censure from official critics. At the meeting of the party organization of the Union of Soviet Writers held in Leningrad in January, 1941, one of the delegates declared that during the past years not a single literary work of genuine value had been produced. This was perhaps too extreme a statement, for a certain literary evolution is taking place in the U.S.S.R., but the fact remains that the intellectual and artistic world of the Soviet Union has, during recent years, suffered heavy casualties.

Between 1937 and 1940, Soviet literary reviews, which formerly had contained works of considerable interest, published a series of absolutely valueless novels, short stories, plays, and poems. Most of these were dedicated to the glorification of Stalin and to other stereotyped themes, such as the eulogy of Soviet builders, the struggle against "spies and saboteurs," and other incidents connected with Stalin's purges. Even such a talented writer as Yury Herman, whose first novel *Nashi znakomye* [Our Acquaintances] (1936), attracted great attention, devoted his second work, *Vasily Zhmakin* to the "heroes of the G.P.U."

Under these circumstances one can scarcely speak of striking and new creative trends in Soviet literature to date, and the years 1940-41 have not brought any sensational changes in this sphere. With the exception of Mikhail Sholokhov, who published in 1940 the two last volumes of *And Quiet Flows the Don*, and of Kataev and Leonov (whose plays are indubitably interesting, though severely condemned by official critics)—most authors have abstained from writing.

It is hard to believe that this abstention is due to the lack of creative forces;

it must be interpreted as a silent protest against an ideological dictatorship which has become intolerable.

Soviet critics have themselves come to deplore this sad plight of communist literary production. They have been obliged to recognize that "socialist realism," the slogan issued by official circles a few years ago, has yielded meager results. They now denounce the stereotyped character of most recent literary works. Such authors as have broken their silence have produced only conventional, pale and lifeless novels, full of an artificial pathos. A lengthy criticism, signed "Observer" and published in the August-September number of the *Literaturnyi sovremennik* [Literary Contemporary] for 1940, admits that these authors enclose life in "the frames of imaginary conceptions and schemes" and do not reflect what Balzac described as "the mighty image of the contemporary world." In Soviet literature, the critic goes on to say, there exists a certain fixed formula, according to which all novels are to be written; they deal with the story of a hero or heroine, who has become successful in life and has built up his or her personality thanks to the revolution. It may be the story of a poor girl, who suffered humiliation and oppression under the old régime and became a famous Soviet actress, or the adventures of a tramp or thief, whom the G.P.U. converts to the ideals of social service. Again, it may be a peasant attached to private property who, under the beneficent influence of communist teaching, becomes an enthusiastic member of a collective farm. Such stories, "Observer" concludes, are but "narrow frames," "handy plots established once for all," a series of "ready made patterns."

But what worries the critics most of all, is that Soviet literature has as yet failed to create a definite and representative type—the type of "Soviet Man," or, as the official slogans term it, the "Hero of Soviet Reality." At the Leningrad meeting of the party organization of the Union of Soviet Writers, the speaker declared: "Great masters, who have created many a precious work of art, have not, during recent years, given us a single book dealing with Soviet Man. . . . Authors, who ten years ago depicted the stirring problems of contemporary life, have now busied themselves with everything, except with the real, vivid Soviet Man." In one of the literary reviews, a bolder critic went so far as to say that "there exists no Hero of Soviet Reality, but only bureaucratic optimism."

It is probably due to this open disapproval and these sarcastic remarks that Soviet critics have suffered a severe purge. Last winter the Literary Critics Section of the Union of Soviet Writers was closed, and its leading organ suspended by order of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. But these drastic measures cannot conceal the fact that literary circles of the U.S.S.R. are absolutely out of hand.

In this respect, Sholokhov's last volume of *And Quiet Flows the Don*—is quite typical. The end of this four-volume novel, which has become

famous in Russia, was eagerly anticipated both by the critics and by the public. So far as the public was concerned, it met with genuine success. After the concluding chapters were read on the radio, thousands of enthusiastic letters flowed in from the listeners. But official circles were disappointed, even showed irritation, though Sholokhov is considered one of the most representative authors of the U.S.S.R. and cannot be openly attacked. For it is obvious that the final volume of this massive novel fails to give what the formulators of the party-line expected. It makes no attempt to give a portrait of the Soviet Man.

Gregor Malenkov, Sholokhov's hero, is a typical Don Cossack, commander of a cavalry squadron, who first fights against the Bolsheviks, then joins the Reds, and finally turns once more against them as a member of a guerilla detachment. Naturally, everyone had expected Gregor Malenkov to be finally converted to communism in the last chapters of the book. Instead, Gregor admits that he yearns only to return to his native farm, till the soil, live with his children and to give up all other preoccupations, ideals, and struggles:

"I've served my time," Gregor declares, "I don't want to serve anybody any more. I've fought more than enough for my age and I'm absolutely worn out. I'm fed up with everything, with the revolution and with the counter-revolution. Let all that—let it all go to hell! I want to live the rest of my life with my children, to return to the farm, that's all. . . . If only it was possible to have neither Whites nor Reds in Tatarsk, it would be much better."

Sholokhov's last volume of *And Quiet Flows the Don* is the outstanding literary event of the past years. It is worthy of the preceding volumes and forms with them a rural and war epic which may be considered a masterpiece.

*And Quiet Flows the Don* was compared by Gorky to Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. The comparison seems somewhat far-fetched; Sholokov's powerful but rough-hewn prose scarcely approaches Tolstoy's perfection of style. True, just as Tolstoy described in *War and Peace* a momentous period of Russian history, so Sholokhov has depicted a critical and tragic epoch and its repercussions on various strata of Russian society. But Sholokhov's paintings, notwithstanding his indubitable talent, remain frescoes. They have neither the depth nor intensity of Tolstoy's work. And they lack individual human pathos; only in the concluding pages does the author give vent to the natural, deep aspirations of the human soul. Moreover, and this is most important of all, Sholokhov's work, born in the oppressive atmosphere of a materialistic world, lacks the powerful spiritual undercurrent so profoundly felt in every page written by Tolstoy.

However, *And Quiet Flows the Don* is not only a powerfully written book, it is a work of genuine beauty. Sholokhov has a profound feeling for nature,



for the "good earth," to which the Don Cossack is so closely linked. The rhythm of nature, the seasons, and the various phases of agricultural work form one great cycle in which the life of field and forest and the life of man are intimately mingled.

We have described above the tendency to escape the narrow, stifling world of official ideology which can be observed in recent Soviet literature. Typical and striking evidence of this voluntary abstention is the fact that during the entire period of the Soviet-German friendship of 1939 to 1941, no echo of it can be found in literary production. There is no mention of Germany, or of Hitler's successive drives, in the books or reviews published during these two years. There was only one exception, but even that was not to the advantage of Nazism. Ilya Ehrenburg, one of the most representative Soviet writers (though, it must be added, not one of the most talented), was in Paris when the Germans entered the French capital. On his return to the U.S.S.R., he published a poem describing the resentment of the French people toward "the foreign trumpeters, with foreign brass and foreign haughtiness." In Leningrad, Ehrenburg lectured about his experience in France; he spoke before a full house, and the enthusiastic welcome he received was regarded as a silent homage not to the conqueror but to the conquered.

Another interesting trait of recent Soviet literary production is an attempt to strike the personal, individual note instead of the collective and social one. In the short stories published in leading Soviet reviews, such as *Novy Mir*, *Zvezda*, *Krasnaya Nov*, one feels this individual soul, seeking—as yet timidly—to express itself. Thus, for instance, in A. Stein's *Sutki* [Twenty-Four Hours], describing an episode of the Finnish campaign, the author stresses, not the warlike pathos of the Red Army, but the personal tragedy of an army doctor tormented by love for his estranged wife. Simon Schulman's *Syn* [Son], which attracted great attention, is dedicated to paternal feelings: a military commander recognizes in a young army flier his own son whom he had abandoned years before, and the relations between father and son, thus unexpectedly thrown together, form the plot of the story. In B. Vadetsky's *Ispytanie* [Ordeal], a young woman working on a collective farm confides to her friends that she thought she was destined to fight "spies and saboteurs"; instead, she has been involved in matrimonial tragedy, having been misunderstood and misjudged by her own husband. . . . Most striking is a short story by Pavel Nilin, called *O lyubvi* [Love], in which a boy, a member of the Communist Youth, commits suicide because of an unhappy love affair. One of his comrades observes that "school-boys committed suicide, young officers shot themselves, girls swallowed poison in the far away days of romantic pre-revolutionary Russia; but that a communist youth should thus end his life is something totally unheard of. In the concluding scene, a curious crowd attends the boy's funeral: "Every

one was interested," writes Nilin, "to see the funeral of a young Communist who shot himself for love."

The only echoes of the great events of 1939-41 which can be found in Soviet literature refer to the Finnish campaign. But even here, the authors refrain from official communist slogans. They give mostly simple, sober sketches of the life at the front, and describe war episodes without any attempt at bravado. One of the leading Soviet poets, Aleksei Surkov, who was sent to the Finnish front as war correspondent, published a volume of verse called *Dekabrskii Dnevnik* [December Journal] from which we quote the following lines; they are of interest in so far as they express a new form of Soviet patriotism, making no mention of communist ideology and reflecting the pure ideals of the soldier:

The highest of all civil rights  
Is to meet the wind of battle in the name of life,  
And, if needed—conquering death by death,  
To gain through fire a hero's immortality.

It is worth noting that the very phrase "conquering death by death" is that of the solemn Russian Easter chant: "Christ has arisen from the dead, conquering death by death." Such lines as these give us the feeling that the Finnish campaign, with its heavy casualties, hardships, and suffering, has awakened the soul of the Russian intellectuals to realities which have swept away the last vestiges of "bureaucratic optimism."

The latest productions of Soviet authors express a new national feeling which acquires exceptional significance in the light of present events. This new patriotic strain is especially to be found in the numerous historical novels which are being published in the U.S.S.R. Among them should be mentioned, after Aleksei Tolstoy's *Peter the Great*, Victor Shklovsky's *Minin and Pozharsky*, which is the account of the liberation of Moscow from the Poles in the seventeenth century, Alexander Zonin's *Vospitanie Moryaka* [The Education of a Sailor], which is a life of Admiral Makarov, the hero of the Russo-Japanese War, and *Dmitri Donskoi* by Sergei Borodin.

*Dmitri Donskoi* is exceptionally interesting; though written by a minor author and lacking intrinsic literary value, it is animated by a spirit which should not be overlooked. And as a historic novel, reflecting the peculiar atmosphere of the early Muscovite period, it is true to fact, and is an extremely readable and entertaining piece of work.

Prince Dmitri Donskoi, under the guidance of one of Russia's greatest saints, St. Sergei of Radonezh, defeated the Tartars in 1380 in the battle of Kulikovo, and laid the foundations of a free Russian state. The author shows the young Dmitri preparing for his great task as state builder: "The Moscow

Prince hoarded riches, as his father and grandfather had done; he was careful in spending, and placed military science above everything else. He was simply clad and did not wear heavy Byzantine robes." One of his advisers tells him: "Remove the yoke from Russian land, Dmitri, and if thou succeedest in breaking yet another strap of that yoke, thou shalt be blessed. . . ."

The very fact that the author deals with a period of Russian history which is closely linked to the church and its saints, lends to his tale a religious note totally unexpected in Soviet literature. In his description of St. Sergei in the garden of his famous monastery of the Holy Trinity, Borodin has achieved something better than historical accuracy:

"The Abbott stood with rolled-up sleeves before an open beehive; Sergei's uncovered face bent over the bees; he was thin, well-proportioned, his small red beard streaked with silver. The bees quietly and monotonously hovered around him, without touching his head and hands; they swarmed above him and, illumined by the sun, they looked like a halo rising over his head."

The presence of a religious undercurrent is continually felt in Borodin's novel: "Today, Russia is strong because of her faith," says one of Sergei's monks: "Faith is like an iron band, a hoop. . . ." And the author points out that St. Sergei refused to become a metropolitan, but that "in his ragged clothes, covered with the dust of the road, enveloped in the glory of wisdom and saintliness, he was more powerful than all the princes and the metropolitan himself."

It is as yet premature to speak of a revival of Russian literature, and the lack of important work persists in the U.S.S.R. Stalin's purges and the severe ideological dictatorship have dispersed Russian creative forces and inflicted upon Soviet intellectual life too heavy a blow to be easily overcome. And yet, a new trend is distinctly felt in this field. The disappearance of stereotyped communist fiction, the silence of a group of authors who refuse to write "on order," the turning to Russia's great historic traditions—all these are healthy symptoms, signs that a revival is possible. And in so far as literature reflects the soul of a people, and this is particularly true of Russian literature, these symptoms point to a gradual transformation of Soviet psychology.

Russia is at present facing one of the greatest ordeals of her history. It is a consoling fact that her spirit has not been broken, in spite of communist tyranny, and that she is meeting this ordeal at an hour when her national consciousness, her sense of human values, her natural emotions and aspirations have been gradually reawakened. It is, as it were, through some mysterious premonition, that the figure of St. Sergei—Russia's spiritual builder—looms in Soviet literature at an hour when the nation's fate is once more to be decided.

# The Soviet Oil Industry

BY ALEXANDER NAZAROFF

THIS is a general survey of the Soviet oil industry as it was on, and before, the memorable date of June 22, 1941, when the German guns unleashed their first barrage against Russia. What will become of this industry now? In whose hands will it be? What use will be made of it? Such questions can only be asked rhetorically, and time alone can supply the answers. These uncertainties, however, apart from other considerations, may in themselves justify the present survey. One need hardly waste space re-stating the importance of the rôle which the Russian petroleum may play in the present world conflict.

Most of the factual data to be found here have been derived from the Soviet press. Only in extremely rare cases have I availed myself of information from other sources—sources which I regard as thoroughly dependable.

## I

The Soviet oil industry entered the span of the Third Five Year Plan (1938–1942) with rosy hopes and expectations. As is known, the actual Plan for these years was formulated and made public only at the beginning of 1939. For the petroleum industry, it was an ambitious plan.

It was decided that, by substantially increasing operation each year, the annual recovery of crude oil (with natural gas) would attain 54,000,000 tons in 1942 as against 30,700,000 in 1937; in other words, an increase of 77 per cent would be realized within five years. The Plan laid great stress on an especially rapid development of the oil industry in Eastern Russia, including her Asiatic possessions. Thus, the production of the fields of the so-called "2nd Baku," a huge area between the Volga and the Urals in which, some years ago, Soviet geologists discovered rich deposits of oil, was to increase not by 77, but by more than 500 per cent: it was scheduled to leap from less than 2,000,000 metric tons in 1939 to 11,772,000 in 1942. The idea behind that "Eastward orientation" of the Plan was obvious: the Soviet government was striving to develop a dependable inland "oil base," which would not be as vulnerable to possible attack as, for instance, the old Baku, pressed close to the Russo-Iranian border.

The Plan further provided for a great intensification of geological survey; for the modernization of the technique of oil well drilling; and for a considerable extension of storage facilities and oil pipe line network. Finally, it foresaw a great expansion of oil processing facilities. It stated that

"new refineries with an aggregate annual capacity of 15,000,000 metric tons must be put into operation, in addition to new cracking installations representing 4,500,000 tons of additional capacity." Of these new processing establishments, plants with a total annual capacity of 6,000,000 tons were to be erected in the 2nd Baku.

Such were the Soviet expectations of 1938-39. Nor did they appear to be exaggerated or unreasonably optimistic. For, in those days, the prospects for the development of the Russian oil resources seemed to be excellent.

Indeed, both before and after 1938, Soviet geologists carried on an enormous amount of surveying and prospecting. Some of it may have been done haphazardly, but a great task was accomplished, and new possibilities were laid at the feet of the Soviet government.

In the great, and as yet scarcely scratched expanses of the 2nd Baku, a number of new rich oil-bearing regions—the Verkhne-Chussovskie Gorodki, northwest of Perm, the Tuimaza fields, the "southern plateau" of the remarkable Ishimbayev area, and others—were either discovered, or first put into operation, or both.<sup>1</sup> Serving as a geographical and geological continuation of the 2nd Baku, the northern Krasnokamsk region and the extreme-northern Chibiu fields in the basin of the Pechora River began to yield crude oil.<sup>2</sup> In the Ukraine, the exploitation of the new, and allegedly quite promising, Lubny and Romny region got under way. These were the first barrels of oil extracted in the part of the Ukraine which had always belonged to the Soviet Union—the first, but not the last. A large geological expedition, organized in 1939 by the Academy of Sciences, came to the conclusion that oil was present in quite a few areas of the wide belt which cuts across the entire central-southern European Russia from its western confines to the lower Volga.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, Soviet experts were unanimous in asserting that the recovery of oil could be substantially increased in the part of the Ukraine seized from Poland, that is, in Galicia. It was announced that, near Lwow, a whole new oil-bearing region, Zaolze, had been discovered. In Northern Bukovina, another newly acquired territory, energetic measures were being taken in order to resume the production of the crude oil which, in the last years of the Rumanian rule, had been badly neglected.<sup>4</sup> Finally, the presence of oil, long assumed, was definitely ascertained at Kerleuta, near the city of Theodosia in the Crimea.

Soviet prospects in her Asiatic domains appeared to be quite as bright. In the incomparable old Baku, which remains to this day Russia's greatest supplier of oil, exploitation was expanded west and south-west to important new regions (Chakhnaglyary, Ilyich Bay, etc.). In another old oil region, Grozny, in the Northern Caucasus, the newly prospected Oisungury section

<sup>1</sup>*Industriya*, February 28, 1940; August 3, 1940.

<sup>2</sup>*Industriya*, May 12, 1940; *Russian Economic Notes*, No. 2, 1940.

<sup>3</sup>*Industriya*, June 17, 1940.

<sup>4</sup>*Industriya*, September 11, 1940.



(near Gudermes) began to yield rapidly increasing amounts of "black gold." New fields began to operate also at and around Maikop. Still more promising, perhaps, appeared the birth of the oil industry in Georgia (Transcaucasia). Important deposits of oil were discovered there only a few years ago. Yet, in 1940, oil was already being extracted in four areas: the Shirak Steppe, Norio (near Tbilisi), Supsa, and Mirzaani, and a score of new wells were being drilled.<sup>5</sup> In Central Asia, along the Eastern shores of the Caspian Sea, important developments were also in progress. The old Emba fields were considerably expanded by the addition of the rich Kulsary section, while the yield of the new Nebit-Dagh "oil base" (near Krasnovodsk) showed a substantial increase.<sup>6</sup> To conclude, oil was found, and a few wells began to function, even in the far-off Yakutsk province of Eastern Siberia, at Chenkiami and elsewhere.

In 1940, *Neftyanoe Khozyaistvo*, the official organ of the People's Commissariat of the Oil Industry, asserted (No. 4-5) that 57.3 per cent of the world's entire oil resources were to be found within the boundaries of the Soviet Union. That may or may not be an exaggeration. What is beyond doubt, however, is that Russia's oil wealth is enormous, and that of late a great deal has been accomplished towards locating and investigating it.

In 1938-39 the portion of that wealth ready for exploitation may have been small. Yet it was certainly quite large enough to justify the Soviet program for the increase of production. The Soviet government never hesitated to dump billions of roubles and any amount of labor into the industrial developments which it deemed to be important. In these war years, it is, therefore, fully to be expected that the oil schedule of the Third Five Year Plan, from increase in production of crude oil to the erection of huge new refineries, will be fully maintained, cost what it may.

## II

In the first three and a half years of the Plan's span (1938-summer of 1941), the whole program was a conspicuous failure.

To begin with, the production of crude oil and natural gas fell far below the amount planned. From 30,700,000 metric tons in 1937, it did rise to about 32,200,000 in 1938; yet, that was obviously not the rate of increase which would enable the Soviets to achieve the production of 54,000,000 metric tons in 1942. But matters became even worse in 1939, when, after the modest flurry of the preceding year, the extraction of crude oil dropped to a little over 30,700,000 tons, that is to say, to the level of 1937—and that when, according to the Plan, it should have been in the neighborhood of 40,000,000 tons! In 1940 the situation improved somewhat: the figure

<sup>5</sup>*Industriya*, July 21, 1940; August 3, 1940.

<sup>6</sup>*Industriya*, July 28, 1940.

for that year rose to about 34,200,000 metric tons; it still remained, however, hopelessly short of the Plan.

In 1941 as one gathers from *Izvestiya* (February 19), the Soviet government formally, though silently, admitted its failure to meet the program for the oil industry: it set 38,000,000 tons of crude as the production figure for that year, while according to the original schedule it ought to have been around 48,000,000. Thus, the whole original idea of ultra-rapid growth was abandoned and a relatively slow tempo was adopted instead. Unfortunately, we possess only incomplete data for the actual production of oil in the first six months of 1941. These data show a certain improvement over 1940, but there is no way of telling whether that improvement was substantial enough to meet the newly-set 38,000,000-ton-per-annum figure.

Furthermore, the Soviet government also failed to effect the "Eastward geographical redistribution" of Russia's petroleum industry scheduled by the Plan. In 1940, just as it had been in 1937, the strategically unsafe old Baku, together with the equally unsafe new Georgian fields, continued to account for about 75 per cent of the total Russian oil production. The share of the North-Caucasian areas declined a bit, roughly speaking, from 16 to 17 per cent of the total (that of Grozny dwindling, while that of Maikop was rising). The development of the 2nd Baku proved to be a far slower and more painstaking task than had been believed: instead of leaping from 2,000,000 tons in 1939 to 3,000,000 tons in 1940, it yielded in the latter year probably only about 2,300,000 tons.<sup>7</sup> The Emba region in Central Asia alone showed a steady increase; but it was as yet too small to be of much importance. Most of the other new, or newer, oil developments both in European and Asiatic Russia, continued to remain little more than drops in the bucket. Thus, in a geographical sense, the Soviet oil industry remained, in the first months of 1941, just about where it had been in 1937.

A number of reasons can be found to account for these quantitative and "geographical" failures. First, an acute shortage of oil well-drilling equipment has handicapped the Soviet petroleum industry since the spring of 1939. By January 1, of that year, about 700 rotary drills all told were in continuous use in the Soviet Union. The number was obviously inadequate; worse still, we know from *Industriya* and from *Neftyanoe Khozyaistvo* that much of that equipment was badly worn out. Large orders for new drills were placed by the Soviets in the United States; but the outbreak of the European war, the blockade, and later, the "moral embargo," and this country's own domestic defense requirements, prevented these drills from reaching Russia. The result was a real slump in drilling in the second half of 1939 and in the first months of 1940. *Industriya* and other economic publications covering this period are literally filled with frank and bitter complaints over "the discontinuation of drilling" now in this, now in that

<sup>7</sup>*Pravda*, November 29, 1940. The exact figure is not available.

locality, "due to the absence of available drills," with entreaties "to handle the drilling equipment with utmost care," and the like.

The Soviet government showed considerable resourcefulness in coping with this crisis. Cut off from foreign markets, it concentrated with all possible energy, on the expansion of its own drilling equipment industry. At the beginning of 1940, the Baku plants producing such equipment ("Baku Laborer," "First of May," "Schmidt," and "Montin") were being rapidly rebuilt and enlarged. So was the Ordzhonikidze Plant for complex drilling equipment at Podolsk. Simultaneously, six large shops for major repairs of drills were being set up at Ufa, Sterlitamak, and at other points of the 2nd Baku.<sup>8</sup> Apparently, by the summer of 1940, some of these new or renovated plants had got under way, and the number of available drills began to increase. Thus, the worst of the crisis, if not the crisis itself, was over.

But the Soviet government's failure to increase substantially the extraction of crude oil was also due to deeper factors. Foreign experts have long been of the opinion that the exploitation of Russia's oil wealth was carried on by barbarous methods. Not infrequently, wells were drilled not with a long view of normally developing a promising field, but in order to produce the impression of "energetic activity" and to show figures immediately. Not only was much unnecessary drilling done; even potentially useful drilling was often carried out in such a hasty, clumsy, and inexpert way, that valuable layers of oil were submerged in water and ruined for exploitation. Such cases were especially frequent at the time of the two earlier Five Year Plans (belatedly, the Soviet government recognized the situation by shooting quite a few ultra-zealous oil workers as deliberate "saboteurs"); yet such cases occurred also in later years. Moreover, some of the fields in the old areas (Baku, Grozny, etc.) have been overexploited and exhausted; in the years 1936 to 1940, the percentage of wells going out of commission rapidly increased, and the annual yield per well in the Soviet Union dropped from 4,310 metric tons in 1934 to 2,930 in 1939. Hence an especially large amount of drilling would have been required in 1939 and 1940, not only to maintain the production of crude oil at the old level but also to boost it to new peaks; and it was in precisely these years that the drilling equipment crisis hit the industry.

Meanwhile, Russia's domestic consumption of oil and petroleum products was rapidly increasing. Let it be remembered that, even in 1938, 30 per cent of the gasoline, 70 per cent of kerosene, and 80 per cent of ligroine produced in the Soviet Union was being consumed by the country's mechanized and collectivized farms.<sup>9</sup> And, in the five years from 1932 to 1937, the total horsepower of the country's automobile and truck park had increased 572 per cent. Accordingly, in the last pre-war year (1938), Soviet exports

<sup>8</sup>*Industriya*, July 4, 1940; *Neftyanaya promyshlennost S.S.S.R.*, Nos. 1 and 2, 1940.

<sup>9</sup>*Planovoye khozyaistvo*, No. 1, 1938.

of petroleum products dropped to considerably below 1,000,000 tons, and Russia even became a buyer of aviation gasoline in foreign markets. Yet the pact with Germany on August 23, 1939, obligated the Soviet Union to export sizable amounts of oil and its products to the Reich. Just how much was actually exported, no one knows; 900,000 metric tons for the first year of the war and deliveries at a somewhat higher rate for the nine months of the second year have been mentioned, and they do not appear to be far from the truth.

All this has resulted in a serious shortage of oil in the Soviet Union since the end of 1939, and especially since the Russo-Finnish war. Strict control of the purchase of gasoline by civilians was introduced, and Soviet papers daily admonished the citizens to economize on petroleum products as carefully as possible. Paradoxical as it may sound, the second-greatest producer of oil in the world went "oil-thirsty"!

True, one cannot speak of that "thirst" without certain reservations. No secret was made of the fact that the Soviet government had long been storing up "emergency reserves" of oil and its products—the chief emergency, apparently, being a possible war. In November, 1939, statements appeared in Soviet papers from which it could be deduced that, at that time, these reserves amounted to about 4,000,000 metric tons. The war with Finland was too small an affair to have consumed very much of this reserve. But it is quite possible that the government's rigid economy policy of 1940 was due, in part at least, to the desire to make up for the amount consumed in that war, and, in view of the steady worsening of international conditions, to augment the emergency reserves beyond their original figure.

As might have been expected, the Soviet government was not particularly successful in enforcing the "save-oil" program. Wastefulness and often semi-chaotic disorderliness in the management of economic affairs continued with regard to oil. Soviet papers kept complaining that bulky freight was being hauled long distances by truck, although water or rail transportation would have been as adequate; that many hundred tons of petroleum products were going to waste because of the negligence of some industrial plant's personnel who, for no good reason, had failed to provide the storage facilities for them.

Perhaps the most striking case of this kind was told by *Pravda* on March 9, 1941. In the outskirts of Odessa, that paper relates, there were special railroad yards for flushing and reconditioning oil and petroleum product tank cars. Hundreds of such cars arrived there daily, from all over the Ukraine. They were supposed to arrive empty and, indeed, they always came so labelled. But in reality, *Pravda* asserts, most of them were still filled 10 per cent, 25 per cent or even half way with crude oil, gasoline, or other oil product. In the beginning, the administration of the yards repeatedly drew the attention of the institutions concerned to this fact. But,

getting no response, the yard managers merely ordered these residues to be "dumped below the hill." And so, *Pravda* narrates further, "whole lakes in which were mixed precious gasoline, crude oil, ligroine, etc., were formed beside the yards." Citizens came from the near-by streets and took home as much of the mixture as they could carry in pails. Some of Odessa's industrial concerns received, for a nominal fee, the right to take as much of it as they pleased. Yet the "lakes" continued to grow.

According to *Pravda's* review of the situation, in the year 1940 well over 10,000 tons of petroleum products were thus dumped from supposedly empty tank cars—and that at a time when the shortage of oil was one of the grave concerns of the Soviet government.

### III

It is necessary to say a few words about the processing of oil in the Soviet Union. Let it be added, however, that here we shall be treading on insecure ground. Refineries, cracking plants, and the production of gasoline are matters closely related to national defense; accordingly, the Soviet government has by no means been too generous in disclosing precise facts and figures concerning these matters, and our information with regard to them is even less ample than it is with regard to other branches of the oil industry. However, the fundamental facts concerning Soviet oil processing are stated below.

In 1913 the capacity of Russian refineries totalled 7,000,000 tons. By the beginning of 1938, the Soviet Union is believed to have had over fifty processing plants in operation with a total refining capacity of 33,700,000 tons and an aggregate cracking capacity of over 6,500,000 tons. As we already know, the Third Five Year Plan provided for the construction of additional refining facilities for the annual amount of 15,000,000 tons and for the construction of new cracking plants with a capacity of 4,500,000 tons.

How far did this impressive program for the construction of new processing facilities progress between 1938 and June, 1941? The new facts which are available combine into the following picture.

In 1938 a large and excellent cracking plant was completed and began to function at Moscow; its exact capacity is not known, but it became the leading plant of its kind in the Union. Simultaneously, a similar plant was under construction at Kherson. Here, however, an unexpected difficulty occurred. After the first unit of the plant had been completed, it was discovered that it was built on a sandy site, it literally began to sink. Huge additional expenditures had to be made to prevent the plant from "going under." Finally, in May, 1938, the first unit began to function. But in the summer of 1940, the second and third units of the plant were still under construction.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup>*Industriya*, July 17, 1940.



Still more "dramatic" was the history of the mammoth oil processing plant at Ufa (in the 2nd Baku). This gigantic plant was to comprise several autonomous units—a refining and cracking plant of 500,000 tons per annum capacity, polymerization and hydrogenation units, etc., each of which would be an establishment of the first magnitude and all of which, taken together, would form a whole new city. American engineers began its construction in 1937. But here, again, the completion of the first (cracking) unit was accompanied by an unexpected occurrence. Samples of oil which had been sent to the United States when the plans of the Ufa plant were being worked out showed up to three and one-half per cent sulphur, but no salt admixture. Accordingly, a desulphurizing installation was provided for. But when the unit began to function, it was found that the oil which it was processing contained also a huge amount of salt (which, as is known, is as great an enemy of the cracking process as sulphur). Hence, "desalting" accommodations had to be hastily provided—accommodations which did not prove to be wholly satisfactory. Since that time the unit has been functioning, but at a considerably lower capacity than was originally planned. Because of war in Europe, the American engineers left Russia, and Soviet experts had to complete the second and third units of the plant, perhaps with German help. At last, by the end of 1940, these units too, apparently, began to function; but whether they were functioning at the capacity originally planned, remains a question.<sup>11</sup>

Upon their departure from Russia, the American engineers left other unfinished projects—a plant at Saratov (also in the 2nd Baku) similar to that of Ufa, and a polymerization and lubrication plant at Grozny. Shortly afterwards, the first units of these plants began to function, but it is not known whether the Soviets had time to complete them before the beginning of the present conflict.

Finally, during the last months of 1940 and the early months of 1941, some of the units of the Syzran and Sterlitamak cracking plants (2nd Baku) got under way; the already functioning plant at Orsk (for Emba oils) was enlarged; and a few minor installations were made in other parts of Russia.<sup>12</sup>

Withal, the total number of oil processing plants in the Union was increased from over fifty in 1938 to sixty in 1941. The original program of the Third Five Year Plan for the three and one-half years in question was certainly not realized. But that the country's total refining and cracking capacities were substantially increased, the former probably to about 37,500,000 tons, and the latter to something like 7,500,000 tons, there can scarcely be any doubt. Moreover, yet another achievement was recorded. Only some ten years ago, practically all of Russia's refining and cracking facilities were concentrated in Baku and the Grozny regions. In the first

<sup>11</sup>*Industriya*, May 21, 1940; August 29, 1940.

<sup>12</sup>*Neftyanaya promyshlennost S.S.S.R.*, No. 2, 1940.

months of 1941, probably well over fourteen per cent of the country's total production of gasoline was accounted for by inland plants.

What amounts of various petroleum products did the Soviet plants produce out of the total amount of about 34,200,000 tons of crude oil which they had extracted in 1940? That question can be answered only by conjectures—and in only a roughly approximate way. We know from official data<sup>18</sup> that out of 29,300,000 tons of crude recovered in 1936, the Soviet plants produced about 4,700,000 tons of gasoline, 5,400,000 tons of kerosene, 1,210,000 of ligroine and over 3,000,000 tons of lubricating oils. Since 1936, the capacity of the Soviet processing plants has been greatly increased, although we do not know the exact figure of that increase. On the other hand, if in 1932 the Soviet processing plants worked to 94.4 per cent of their capacity, in 1940, they worked only to not more than 82 per cent capacity. A high percentage of sulphur and salt, having been discovered in the 2nd Baku, various maladjustments in new plants, etc., were responsible for this drop. All these things considered, one may surmise that over 6,000,000 tons of gasoline were produced in 1940; but, with regard to the other petroleum products produced in that year, it would be unsafe even to venture a guess.

The frequently expressed view that no high-octane aviation gasoline has been produced in the Soviet Union recently, appears to be incorrect. In 1940 *Industriya* stated on several occasions that Soviet aviation, including the Air Force, "was quite adequately provided" with high-quality gasoline (meaning, apparently, for peace-time needs). Moreover, in the issue of August 18 for that year, the paper stated: "... Section No. 306 of an oil processing plant [the name of the plant was not stated] produces the best aviation gasoline in the country. In that section, a new method has been tried and it has been responsible for a four-fold increase of production. . . ." The octane rating of that gasoline, and the amounts produced, remain unknown.

In conclusion, a brief reference must be made to the Soviet Union's pipe lines. By the end of 1940, the total length of the country's crude and product pipe line system was about 4,900 kilometers. That, for a country as large as Russia, was hopelessly inadequate. For the bulk of its oil transportations, Russia still depended upon the sea and river tanker and upon the railway tank car.

Such, then, was the Soviet oil industry on the day when German guns opened their first barrage against Russian targets.

<sup>18</sup>*Sotsialisticheskoe stroitelstvo S.S.S.R.* (1933-1938), edition of 1939.

# The German Occupation of the Ukraine in 1918

*A documentary account*

BY XENIA JOUKOFF EUDIN

IN NOVEMBER, 1917, when the Bolsheviks came into power in Russia, there already existed in the Ukraine a separate government called the Central Rada, i.e., Council. This government was a coalition of left-wing parties which cherished radical political and economic views and a general aspiration to see the Ukraine established as an autonomous or even an independent republic. The Bolsheviks had no part in this government and in fact regarded it with distrust and contempt. They had proclaimed on November 15, 1917, that the nationalities of the old Russian Empire had the right of self-determination, but it soon appeared that this generous declaration was not all it seemed. According to the Bolsheviks, the existing governments in the Ukraine and elsewhere in Russia did not truly represent the people, whose will, they maintained, could be expressed only by the Bolsheviks themselves or those who accepted their program.

The application of this interpretation of self-determination proceeded in the Ukraine along two lines. First, the Bolsheviks held a congress of Soviets in Kiev and later set up in Kharkov a People's Secretariat as a rival government to the Rada. The second, and more efficient line was an attack on the Ukrainian Rada with the Red Guards from Soviet Russia. It began with an ultimatum in which the Bolshevik government denounced the Rada for its "refusal to recognize the Soviets and the Soviet power in the Ukraine," and was followed by an advance of the Red Guards.<sup>1</sup> The Central Rada replied by proclaiming the independence of the Ukraine, but its forces were too weak to uphold it, and on January 26, 1918, after a severe bombardment, Kiev fell to the Soviet forces.

While these events were taking place in the Ukraine, peace negotiations were going on at Brest-Litovsk between Germany and her allies and Soviet Russia. The Rada had also sent representatives to this meeting, where, to the great annoyance of the Soviet delegates, they negotiated separately with the Germans and Austro-Hungarians. These negotiations produced on February 9, 1918, a treaty by which the Central Powers recognized the independence of the Ukraine with the Central Rada as its government. The

<sup>1</sup>J. Bunyan and H. H. Fisher, *The Bolshevik Revolution*, Stanford University, 1934, p. 440.

main stipulation was that the Ukraine was to furnish Germany and Austria large quantities of food and other supplies which those countries desperately needed. The Rada, which had already lost a large part of the Ukrainian territory to the Soviets, naturally turned to the Germans. On February 17, the Rada appealed to the German "love of peace and order" to assist in repelling the invasion of the northern neighbors, and a day later, the Germans under Field Marshal von Eichhorn advanced into the Ukraine. Meeting no resistance whatever from the fleeing Soviet armies, the German forces took Lutsk on February 19, and Zhitomir on February 24. By March 2 Kiev was in German hands, and Kamenets-Podolsk and other points in southern Ukraine were held by Austrian troops. Not slackening their advance the German and Austrian troops of occupation held, by the end of April, 1918, the entire Ukrainian territory, Crimea, and the territories adjacent to the northern Caucasus.

On March 2, 1918, the Ukrainian Soviet government, previously obliged to flee Kiev, issued the following declaration addressed to all workers' deputies of the Ukraine: "Faced with a numerically superior army, and unwilling to make Kiev a battlefield, we have decided to evacuate that city and to remove our army. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

A month later, on April 19, the Central Executive Committee of the Ukrainian Soviets, now at Taganrog, proclaimed to the workers and peasants of the Ukraine:

In this difficult moment when . . . [you] are being trampled under the feet of German executioners and *Haidamak*<sup>3</sup> jailers, when the newly liberated people are again being forced under the yoke of shameful servitude . . . we, your legal government, elected by the Ukrainian people, assume our duty to declare that we have firmly resolved to fight to our last man and our last drop of blood against the enemies of the Ukrainian workers and peasants.

We are absolutely convinced that, in spite of our present military failures, the death hour of the Central Rada will soon strike, and the hour of final triumph for the Ukrainian workers and peasants will come. Every struggle has its inevitable moments of victory and defeat. In vain, the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie hopes that the *Haidamak*-German usurpers will long retain power. This shall not be. . . .

The Ukraine is being occupied by German troops. Guarded by German bayonets, the Central Rada does not hesitate to assume openly a policy of hostility to the people and to take measures against the workers and peasants. Conditions worse than those of Nicholas' time are being reestablished. Not only is the freedom of the people being taken away, but their very life is being destroyed because the Rada, which sold itself to Germany, is giving to Germany bread, sugar, cattle, and other foodstuffs which are so much needed by the

<sup>2</sup>V. A. Antonov-Ovseenko, *Zapiski o grazhdanskoi voine*, 4 vols., Moscow, 1924-33, II, 10-11.

<sup>3</sup>The word *Haidamak* signified originally in the eighteenth century a free Ukrainian fighter, usually an outlaw, who opposed the Polish penetration into the Ukraine. When the Ukraine was proclaimed independent in 1917-18, the Ukrainian army troops again assumed the name of *Haidamaks*.

workers and peasants of the Ukraine. The landlords' rule is being reestablished. The mastery of the capitalists is returning! Workers' organizations are being suppressed. . . .

We, the Soviet government of the Ukraine, call on all of you, workers and peasants of the Ukraine, to oppose with all your might the illegal, spurious government known as the Central Rada, and its Council of Ministers. Pay no taxes, provide no soldiers, give no grain, disobey the Rada's orders, destroy German agents, and clear the Ukraine of the Haidamak and German robbers. The Council of Ministers and the Central Rada, which are trying to govern the Ukraine by the favor of Wilhelm and against the will of the great majority of the Ukrainian people, are illegal and are wholly German creations. . . .<sup>4</sup>

The Central Rada, however, had a different explanation of the German occupation of the Ukraine, which they gave on February 23 in a declaration to the inhabitants of the Ukrainian People's Republic:

. . . In order to put an immediate end to the pillaging of the Ukraine and to make possible, upon the conclusion of peace, immediate promulgation of laws to deal with the land question and the means of improving the general condition of the workers, the Council of People's Ministers has accepted the military assistance of the friendly powers, Germany and Austria-Hungary. . . .

They are coming to the Ukraine to suppress disorder and anarchy and to establish peace and order. . . . They are coming purely to help our Cossacks who are staunchly defending our country, our land, and our freedom from the armed attacks of the Russian government, the Council of People's Commissars, which, like the old tsarist government, wishes to subject the Ukraine to the authority of Russian capitalists, and thus to enable the Russian people to live on the labor and wealth of the Ukrainians.

These troops are well disposed to us, and they will be directed in their struggle against the enemies of the Ukrainian People's Republic by the Ukrainian military staff. In helping the Ukrainian government in its fight against violators and plunderers, these troops have no hostile intentions toward us: it is in the interest of both Germany and Austria-Hungary that order should be reestablished and an opportunity for peaceful work be given to the toilers of the Ukraine.<sup>5</sup>

It was evident, however, that the immediate purpose of the German and Austro-Hungarian occupation was to obtain food and raw materials. According to Article VII of the peace treaty of February 9, 1918, between the Central Powers and the Ukraine "the contracting parties mutually undertook to enter into economic relations without delay and to organize . . . until July 31 of the current year a reciprocal exchange of the surplus of their more important agricultural and industrial products, for the purpose of meeting current requirements."<sup>6</sup> On the basis of this article an economic treaty consisting of a series of separate agreements, was signed in Kiev on April 23, 1918. In one of these agreements the Ukraine promised to provide

<sup>4</sup>*Izvestiya*, No. 86, April 30, 1918, pp. 2-3.

<sup>5</sup>*Vistnik politiki, literatury i zhitya*, No. 12, 1918, p. 182, as quoted in D. Doroshenko, *Istoriya Ukrainy, 1917-1923 rr.*, 2 vols., Uzhgorod, 1930-32, II, 14-15.

<sup>6</sup>*Texts of the Ukraine 'Peace'*, Washington, 1918, p. 12.



by July 31, 1918, 60 million *puds* [1 *pud*=36.1 American lbs.] of grain and its products; delivery of several hundred millions of eggs was to be made before July 31; 2,750,000 *puds* of live, horned cattle were to be supplied. Other agreements covered bacon, textiles, timber, etc., and by the same date thirty-seven million *puds* of iron ore were to be furnished. A separate stipulation dealt with manganese ore. Still another agreement related to the exportation of old iron from the Ukraine.<sup>7</sup>

On their part the Central Powers promised to the Ukraine to deliver before July 31, 1918, 105,000 tons of coal monthly, and 101,500 ploughs, as well as other agricultural implements, chemicals, and mineral oil.<sup>8</sup>

A few months later, another agreement was signed for the fiscal year of 1918-19 by which 65 per cent of the grain was left for domestic consumption in the Ukraine, and 35 per cent was to be exported to the Central Powers. Forty million *puds* of this grain were to be delivered before December 1, 1918, and 75 million *puds* before July 15, 1919.<sup>9</sup>

The German policy in the Ukraine was defined sufficiently clearly in the instructions of the German Foreign office to Baron Mumm, its representative in Kiev, on March 26, 1918:

. . . Our military intervention in the Ukraine is justified by the request of the Rada for help. We have recognized the Rada as the legal government of the Ukrainian Republic and have concluded peace with its representatives. The above facts must determine our further relations with the Ukraine if we wish to be consistent in our policy. Moreover, the main purpose of our occupation is to secure the export of grain from the Ukraine to countries of the Central Powers. Our representatives in Kiev must cooperate in every way possible to realize this aim. There must be no vacillation on our part. The government of the Rada must be continuously reminded that we are fulfilling its request and are strengthening its position, but that we demand that all measures possible be taken to secure the export of grain. We must stress the fact that the prospect of grain supplies alone can redress the balance in our peace agreement with the Ukraine. Consequently, we must insist that the Ukrainian government carry out its peace obligations.

We are far from desiring to interfere in the internal affairs of the Ukraine. We must see, however, that cultivation of the fields is carried out fully; if necessary, some of our regulations can be sacrificed, but in any case our true interests must not suffer. . . .

Lastly, it is necessary to explain to the [Ukrainian] government that the approach of the spring sowing requires immediate and special measures. The Rada should issue an order forcing every actual possessor of land to cultivate

<sup>7</sup>*Texts of the Ukraine 'Peace,'* pp. 146-147; See also *Die deutsche Okkupation der Ukraine; Geheimdokumente*, Strasbourg, 1937, pp. 230-231. This latter volume appeared first in Russian as an official Soviet publication under the title *Krakh germanskoi okkupatsii na Ukraine (po dokumentam okkupantov)*, Moscow, 1936.

<sup>8</sup>G. Gratz and R. Schüller, *The Economic Policy of Austria-Hungary during the War in its External Relation*, New Haven, 1928, p. 128.

<sup>9</sup>The text of this agreement is given in the *Texts of the Ukraine 'Peace,'* pp. 157-158.

that land fully. Such an order need not interfere with future regulations concerning the principle of land ownership. Bussche.<sup>10</sup>

This document establishes quite clearly Germany's intention to exploit to the full her occupation of the Ukraine, even if extraordinary measures proved necessary. That such was immediately the case was evident from the opposition of the peasants to the government's measures of obtaining food supplies for the Central Powers. Naturally loath to surrender their goods at a low price, and hostile to the repossession of their estates by the Ukrainian landlords, only recently deprived of them by the peasants and the Soviet Ukrainian government, the Ukrainian peasants were soon in armed revolt. As early as March 10, 1918, von Bülow, the representative of the German Foreign Office at Brest-Litovsk reported to Berlin on the hostile attitude of the peasant population toward the German troops. Expressing his skepticism of the ability of the Ukrainian government to suppress the peasant discontent, he added significantly: "Bread and forage are our vital necessities. We face the most serious and decisive fighting in the west, and, therefore, no diplomatic considerations in regard to our future relations with the Ukraine should influence our course. If we have no choice, we must take by force what we need for our life and our struggle."<sup>11</sup>

Soon after this the German authorities of occupation took matters into their own hands. Field Marshal von Eichhorn issued two important orders: one, on April 6, dealt with the supervision of the next Ukrainian harvest; the second, on April 25, established courts-martial in the Ukraine.

The first order ruled:

The harvest shall belong to those individuals who sow the seeds. . . .

Any peasant who takes more land than he can cultivate, is doing irreparable harm to the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian people, and, therefore, must be punished.

Whenever the peasants are unable to sow seed, the landlords must do this sowing if they have remained on their estates. . . . Half of the harvest from such planting shall belong to those who sowed the seed, and half to the peasants.

Anyone who attempts to plunder or destroy [crops] shall be severely punished. . . .<sup>12</sup>

The second order read:

Irresponsible individuals and unions are attempting to terrorize the population. In violation of good order and of every right, they are making arrests to intimidate those who, in the interests of their native land and the new government, are ready to work in cooperation with the Germans.<sup>13</sup> I shall allow no

<sup>10</sup>*Die deutsche Okkupation der Ukraine*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>12</sup>Dorozhenko, *Istoriya Ukrainy, 1917-1923*, II, 17-18.

<sup>13</sup>Eichhorn probably means the kidnapping of Dobryi, a banker and director of the Russian Foreign Trade Bank, who was on good terms with the Germans. The kidnapping was arranged by members of the Ukrainian government with the actual participation of the Minister of War. Dobryi was soon found and released by the Germans and the Ukrainian ministers were arrested. Later they were tried by a German court.

lawless action where German troops are stationed. I am, therefore, establishing special courts to serve as a protection for Kiev and to bring to trial all individuals whose actions are illegal. My instructions are as follows:

1. All persons found guilty of violating public order and all criminal offenders against German troops and their allies, or persons connected with these criminal offenders, shall be tried by German court-martial.

2. Any violation of public order, especially as a result of street meetings, is forbidden.

3. Any attempt against public tranquillity or safety through agitation in the press, or by any other means, is also forbidden. Newspapers guilty of such attempts shall be immediately suppressed.

4. The existing Ukrainian courts shall continue their activity but shall not concern themselves with criminal offences which, according to Article 1 of this order, are now under German jurisdiction.

This regulation shall go into effect immediately after its publication and after it is made known by posting in the streets and public places. . . .<sup>14</sup>

Field Marshal von Eichhorn's orders were bitterly resented by the Central Rada, as can be seen from the statement the latter soon issued:

The German troops have been invited to the Ukraine by the Ukrainian government to assist in the reestablishment of order, but the assistance was to be strictly within the limits indicated by the government of the Ukrainian People's Republic.

Arbitrary interference on the part of the German and Austro-Hungarian military commands in the social, political, and economic life of the Ukraine is completely unwarranted.

Any interference similar to Field Marshal Eichhorn's order can only disorganize the national life of the Ukraine, complicate social-political relations, and, in addition, make impossible the fulfillment of the economic agreements between the Ukrainian National Republic and the Central Powers which are now being drafted and signed by the representatives of the above countries.<sup>15</sup>

The relations between the Central Rada and the German authorities of occupation continued to grow worse, and on April 27, V. A. Golubovich, chairman of the Council of People's Ministers, stated at the session of the Rada that the German authorities of occupation had failed again and again to keep the agreement that all orders should be issued only after joint discussion and agreement between the German government and the Rada. He believed that the German government and the majority of the German people had expressed themselves as opposed to the Ukrainian policy of the authorities of occupation. "It is clear," he added, "that we must again appeal to the German government and the German people . . . and demand that the people who disagree with our work and our tasks be recalled by the German government."<sup>16</sup>

Apparently, the Ukrainian government underestimated, if it did not

<sup>14</sup>Dorozhenko, *Istoriya Ukrainy, 1917-1923*, II, 32-33.

<sup>15</sup>Dorozhenko, *Istoriya Ukrainy, 1917-1923*, II, 19.

<sup>16</sup>*Kievskaya Mysl*, No. 64, April 29, 1918.

misinterpret, the German policy in the Ukraine. The fate of the incapable and yet unyielding Central Rada had already been settled before the above statement even appeared. The German authorities found a substitute for the Rada in the person of Pavlo Skoropadsky, a former general of the Russian Imperial Army, an Ukrainian by birth, and a descendant of the Hetman Skoropadsky.<sup>17</sup> Once he became Hetman, the Germans promised assistance to him; otherwise he was expected to accomplish a coup d'état independently. A huge congress of the Ukrainian Association of Agrarians, the so-called *Khleboroby*, a body which supported Skoropadsky, met in Kiev on April 29, and unanimously elected the general Hetman of the Ukraine. With the Ukrainian Central Rada locked up, this was an easy accomplishment.

The members of the . . . Rada met [on April 28] in the same exciting atmosphere as on the day before. . . . The session was devoted entirely to the discussion of General von Eichhorn's order. . . . M. G. Rafes . . . read the official declaration by the German command forbidding May celebrations without special permission. The speaker found in this fact a definite intention [on the part of the Germans] to humiliate the Ukrainian government. . . . The tragedy of the Ukrainian people was great but it was no different from the tragedy of other small nations when they attempted to take the path of independence. The speaker's words were cut short . . . at 3.45 p.m., when a German lieutenant with a detachment of heavily armed soldiers wearing helmets entered the Rada meeting.

"In the name of the German government," the lieutenant said in Russian, "hands up! Do not move!" Excitement swept through the audience and everyone jumped up. Armed German soldiers poured through the open door. . . . "Hands up, hands up," again shouted the lieutenant, who was now joined by several German officers, some of whom spoke Russian. The members of the Rada, the representatives of the press, and the public submissively put up their hands. . . . The chairman alone, M. S. Hrushevsky, remained in his seat and did not lift his hands. He was outwardly calm, but the flushed spots on his cheeks showed his inner turmoil. The soldiers who had spread out over the hall kept their revolvers leveled at the crowd of people who stood motionless with up-raised hands. Revolvers were also directed at Professor M. S. Hrushevsky. "I protest with all my power against the entrance of soldiers in the building of the Rada," said Professor Hrushevsky in Ukrainian. "Who are you?" cut in the lieutenant. "I am Hrushevsky, the chairman of the Central Rada."—"Oh, Hrushevsky," said the lieutenant, "right now I am the only one who will do any talking around here. . . . Where is the Minister of War, Zhukovsky? Where is the Minister of the Interior, Tkachenko?" he shouted. "Where is the Minister

<sup>17</sup>The Hetman was the elected leader of the Ukrainian Zaporozhie Cossacks. The term first came into use in the sixteenth century. The most famous of the Hetmans was Bogdan Khmel'nitsky, who voluntarily subordinated himself to Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich in 1654, remaining, however, head of the Ukrainian government. Another famous Hetman was Mazepa, who enjoyed particular confidence and favors of Peter the Great, but later secretly associated himself with Peter's enemy Charles XII of Sweden. After the death of Hetman Ivan Ilich Skoropadsky in 1722, no Hetmanship was recognized by the Russian tsars. With the election of Pavlo Skoropadsky, as will be seen later, the Hetmanship was revived.

Kovalevsky? Where is the director of the administrative-political department, Gaevsky?" Silence followed. Neither Tkachenko, nor Zhukovsky, nor Kovalevsky was in the hall. "Here I am," the director of the administrative-political department, Iu. I. Gaevsky, said suddenly. Upon an order from the lieutenant, Gaevsky was surrounded by a group of soldiers, arrested, and escorted from the hall. . . .

Everybody still stood in increasing discomfort, their hands high. The commander of the detachment looked everywhere for Tkachenko, Zhukovsky, and Kovalevsky, trying to get their home addresses from Professor Hrushevsky and other deputies who would not give the information.

"Where does Tkachenko live?" the lieutenant asked M. V. Porsh.

"I do not know," answered Porsh with his hands in the air, a copy of the *Neue Freie Presse* in one and his passport in the other.

"And now," shouted the lieutenant in Russian, "all those who have firearms put them on the table. Anyone failing to do this will be severely punished. We shall search everyone."

"I protest most categorically against any searches being conducted in the building of the parliament," said M. S. Hrushevsky.

"Every person who does not surrender his arms will be immediately shot," the other lieutenant said in German.

One of the representatives of the press turned to the first lieutenant: "You do not translate correctly. Your colleague is threatening to shoot us, and you speak in Russian only of severe punishment."

"Never mind," said the first lieutenant calmly, "we will make shooting the punishment."

Again the order for the surrender of arms was given. "Hands down," ordered the second lieutenant in German. Everyone put down his hands. Several people walked to the table and placed their revolvers on it in front of M. S. Hrushevsky, who still sat there. . . .

The names of the Rada members were taken down, and each was marched into another room next to the hall where soon all of them were gathered. [In the end one member after another was permitted to leave, and even M. S. Hrushevsky was finally released. The German guard was removed.] . . . .

The doors of the building were opened again. Members of the Rada passed in freely . . . and gathered in groups excitedly discussing what had happened. "Are we dispersed or aren't we?" the delegates kept asking each other. And to this question no one seemed to be able to give a definite answer.<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, the German government and the authorities of occupation in the Ukraine, while admitting to one another that their policy was that of guidance and control, nevertheless tried to maintain the semblance of an independent Ukraine. On May 8, von dem Bussche-Haddenhausen, Undersecretary of State in the Foreign Office, wrote to Baron Mumm in Kiev:

[The headquarters staff of] Eichhorn's army has sent to the commander-in-chief of the Eastern front a communiqué, number 132, concerning the procurement of food from the Ukraine. Paragraph 8 states: "First, we must give up the policy which appears to convey the fiction that we are simply present in a friendly country. The new [Ukrainian] government must do whatever we consider necessary. Instructions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to our Am-

<sup>18</sup>*Kievskaya Mysl*, No. 64, April, 29, 1918.



bassador should be worded accordingly. There is complete agreement between the ambassador and the army commander." Please explain the meaning of this statement. Does it mean that we must not treat the Ukraine as a [free] nation at peace with us, but simply as a region of occupation? Telegraph your answer.

Baron Mumm replied on May 9:

I agree that our policy should not be simply that of "being present in a friendly country." But I believe it necessary to support in the Ukraine the fiction of an *independent* state friendly to us as far as this is in our interest. The following reasons call for such a policy: attention must be paid to public opinion in our country, as well as to opinion in neutral and enemy countries. It is necessary to take into account the fact that we may undermine the authority which the Ukrainian government now enjoys among the population if we show too openly that this government is simply a puppet in our hands, and that its orders serve only our interests. It is important also to take into consideration the future of our political and economic relations with the Ukraine. My conviction that General Groener shares my point of view, although his pronouncements may bear a military rather than a diplomatic character, makes it possible for me to act, in regard to our most important problems, in full agreement with him. . . .<sup>19</sup>

No sooner had the Hetman been elected than opposition to his government and to the German troops of occupation flared up. Thus, early in May the Ukrainian Peasant Congress resolved:

To reject with contempt the Hetman's self-styled authority, which was created by the nobles, large estate owners, village *kulaks*, and capitalists, and which has no support or recognition from the democratic groups of the Ukraine, and to call the peasants to a decisive, uncompromising armed struggle against the Hetman's régime. . . .

To insist that the Central Powers refrain from interference in the economic and political affairs of the Ukrainian People's Republic and to protest against and to condemn strongly: the active interference, by means of military superiority of representatives of foreign powers, in the class struggle in the Ukraine; the dispersion of the Ukrainian parliament; and the establishment of a Hetman-ship in the Ukraine, which can only appeal to a small group of landowners and capitalists hostile to the Ukrainian People's Republic and to all the achievements of the revolution.<sup>20</sup>

The Ukrainian peasants, like their Russian brothers, were at that time in a highly excitable mood, intoxicated with newly acquired liberties and determined to have the landlords' land. Nor should it be forgotten that the Bolsheviks who remained in hiding in the German-occupied territories were not idle. They did their best to incite and arouse the Ukrainian people against both Skoropadsky's government and the German authorities of occupation. A Communist gives the following account of these efforts:

<sup>19</sup>Die deutsche Okkupation der Ukraine, pp. 72, 73.

<sup>20</sup>Pavlo Khristyuk, *Zamitki i materiialy do istorii ukrainskoi revoliutsii, 1917-1920* 11., 3 vols., Vienna, 1921, III, 14-15.

Following the instruction of the Central Revolutionary Committee, we created a military organization. In Kiev itself two headquarters—one for the town and one for the guberniya [province]—were established. The town headquarters directed about a score of military groups formed from the workers. . . . Instructors were sent from Moscow. These were well trained military men who had recently undergone a special course of instruction. . . . Later we gave up forming detachments of workers and decided to form mainly detachments of peasants. The peasants were very well disposed toward the Bolshevik party. . . .<sup>21</sup>

In June, the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Kiev Guberniya circulated a proclamation among the Ukrainian people in which it appealed for the organization of guerilla warfare:

When Wilhelm's troops occupied the workers' and peasants' Ukraine and began to strangle the Ukrainian revolution in the interests of the Ukrainian and German rich, the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of the Ukraine . . . addressed a manifesto to the workers and peasants of the Ukraine calling them to a revolt against the Ukrainian and German bourgeoisie, against the rule of Hetman, and against the Kaiser's troops supporting this rule.

The members of the Central Executive Committee scattered all over the Ukraine to prepare a revolt, and nine elected members organized "the Committee of Revolt." These "nine" have the task of supplying the peasants and the workers with the necessary military materials. The whole Ukraine must become a network of . . . committees of revolt which will furnish the necessary leadership. The Military Revolutionary Committee of the Kiev Guberniya calls all party, and all workers' and peasants' organizations, who stand for the government of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' deputies, and in the localities where no such Soviets exist, to individual comrades, to form local military revolutionary committees. . . . [The following rule of operation must be acted upon:] Attack must always be on the enemy's weakest point; an enemy which is stronger must be avoided. The department of formation [of armed forces] must prepare all reliable peasants and workers in a given locality for action when general revolt begins, or when it becomes necessary to start separate revolts. . . . The main rules in partizan fighting consist in secret planning for action; in advancing quickly; in cutting the enemy off from any possible aid; in preparing a means of retreat; and finally in always remembering that victory comes to the one who advances and knows against whom he is advancing. While issuing the above instructions, the Kiev Guberniya Military Revolutionary Committee called [the people] to immediately organize the above committees in the Kiev Guberniya and to establish contact with the Kiev Committee. . . . "Onward! Let us organize and fight. Organize yourselves and rise against your own and the German bourgeoisie! Until now the German soldiers have been serving their own bourgeoisie; eventually they will understand that the peasants and workers of all countries are comrades; then they will turn their bayonets against our common oppressors. Become friends with the German soldiers, explain to them how terrible it is to strangle the Ukrainian revolution. Persuade them to overthrow their Wilhelm and all his ministers and generals. Long live the universal armed revolt against German plutocrats and against our own

<sup>21</sup>M. Maiorov, *Iz istorii revolyutsionnoi borby na Ukraine, 1914-1919*, Kiev, 1922, p. 86.

plutocrats. It makes no difference who is at the helm: the Central Rada, Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky, or Hetman Vasily Habsburg. . . .<sup>22</sup>

More and more, the general discontent of the peasants expressed itself in riots and acts of incendiarism. On June 10, Baron Mumm sent the following ciphered telegram to the Foreign Office in Berlin:

Information continues to come in about the plan of the "All-Ukrainian Revolutionary Committee" to create country-wide disturbances, about attacks on small German detachments, and about the plan to sabotage the railways. In view of this information the Field Marshal [Eichhorn] had decided to give up his trip to Odessa and to postpone his journey to the Crimea. Conditions in Zvenigorodka are more serious than has been officially stated. The peasants supported by the Czechoslovaks [sic] have driven back German military units, and are temporarily holding them in check. Reinforcements have been sent to this region tonight and it is expected that they will reestablish order. . . .<sup>23</sup>

Similar information was sent on June 11 by Count Forgach, the Austro-Hungarian diplomatic representative at Kiev, to his government:

Reports of unrest in the country are more frequent. The fighting of the Germans in the Zvenigorodka region southeast of Kiev is of a serious nature and has led to many losses. On the eastern front, near Taganrog, attacks were made on the Germans by partizan bands and by the Bolshevik troops. The Royal and Imperial troops [i.e., the Austro-Hungarian troops] in the region of Elizavetgrad are still engaged in combat. The forces which we originally provided proved to be insufficient, and additional troops had to be sent.

A proclamation was found in Kiev issued by the All-Ukrainian Revolutionary Committee giving detailed [revolutionary] instructions including communication among revolutionary groups by means of colored signal flares. For some time German sentries in Kiev have reported seeing these. Many officers have been killed in the railway cars. Acts of sabotage on the railway and the blowing up of bridges as well as the dislocation of railway communication have occurred on several railway lines. Hand grenades have threatened the lives of the railwaymen. The German commandant in Kiev, in agreement with the Ukrainian government, has today published an order in the newspapers and in the streets forbidding all gatherings and all strikes. An order was recently issued setting up the strictest measures for the confiscation of firearms. Many arrests have been made. Discussions have been held concerning possible military action, and complete agreement has been established between the armies of Eichhorn and the command of the Royal and Imperial armies. . . .<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup>"Iz istorii grazhdanskoi voiny na Ukraine v 1918 g.," in *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, No. 4 (95), Moscow, 1939, pp. 180-182.

<sup>23</sup>*Die deutsche Okkupation der Ukraine*, p. 201. According to the Soviet sources, Zvenigorodka Uezd [district] was the center during June-July, 1918, of the most serious peasant insurrections against the troops of occupation. The revolt was originally caused by the actions of a Ukrainian punitive detachment.

<sup>24</sup>"Iz istorii grazhdanskoi voiny na Ukraine v 1918 g.," in *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, 95, pp. 84-85.

On June 21, Hetman Skoropadsky, realizing his inability to suppress the peasant opposition, decided to appeal to the Germans for more help. The Minister of Foreign Affairs in Skoropadsky's government made the request to Baron Mumm:

Since the valiant and disciplined troops of the friendly disposed German Empire arrived in the Ukraine, the Ukrainian government, thanks to their help, has not found it difficult to suppress the Bolshevik movement in individual localities. But, taking into consideration the fact that German troops are posted only in certain districts and that there are uyezds [districts] in which law and order have not been fully established, His Highness the Hetman has seen fit to express the wish that the units of the troops of the German Empire be stationed in such a way as to render help to the local Ukrainian authorities and to restore law and order.

At the request of His Highness we have the honor to ask the Honorable Representative to communicate this wish to the proper German military authorities, and at the same time to be good enough to inform the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the measures taken as a consequence of this letter. . . .<sup>25</sup>

As the time went on, new regions were involved in the strife against the government and the German authorities. On July 18, a Ukrainian official reported as follows to the Minister of Foreign Affairs:

According to information received, an indefinite number of insurgents have occupied three quarters of Tarashcha Uezd. The main group of the insurgents consists of 2,000 men, well organized and armed. The Bolshevik detachments are not surrounded and maintain uninterrupted communication with [other] uyezds. Thus far the German troops have been on the defensive. In addition to the above, the following should also be taken into consideration: the insurgents occupy considerable territory and have complete freedom of action for their further organization, arming and reinforcements; they possess a base from which they can seriously threaten the existing government authority. The harvesting has already begun, and if no immediate and decisive measures are taken for the destruction of the Bolshevik [detachments] the harvest of the richest section of the Kiev Guberniya will be lost. Further delay in the struggle against the insurgents will only lead to the increase of their activity and the growth of their influence among the population. In view of the above I hope, Sir, that you will find it possible to enter into an immediate contact with the High Command concerning the dispatch to Tarashcha and to the adjoining uyezds sufficient German forces to bring about the immediate and decisive suppression of the revolt. . . .<sup>26</sup>

The expressed anxiety was justified. According to the Soviet account, this

<sup>25</sup>*Letopis Revolyutsii*, No. 1 (6), Ukrainian publication, 1924, p. 75, given in S. Piontkovsky, *Grazhdanskaya voina v Rossii (1918-1921)*; *Khrestomatiya*, Moscow, 1925, pp. 366-367.

<sup>26</sup>"Iz istorii grazhdanskoi voiny na Ukraine v 1918 g." in *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, 95, pp. 87-88.

revolt spread throughout the entire uezd and later involved other uezds. It continued for about two months and in the end forced the German command to send large forces to suppress it. The insurgents fought stubbornly and at first forced the Germans to retreat. The Hetman's police forces were annihilated, and the estate owners were obliged to flee. Pressed by the Germans, the insurgents finally retreated to the Dnieper, and eventually crossed the Soviet frontier.

General unrest was not restricted to the peasants. The Ukrainian workers oppressed by hard economic conditions and unemployment also were restless, and strikes broke out in many places. But the Germans were determined to put a stop to this, and the German Commander in Kharkov issued the following order:

Unpatriotic elements in the Ukraine are trying to destroy law and order in the country by inciting the population to strike and by interfering with regular communications. To prevent the disorder which may ensue therefrom, I declare that:

1. All meetings and gatherings both in the streets and in public places are hereby forbidden. Forbidden likewise is the unauthorized abandonment of work in factories, the damaging or destroying of means of transport, and the causing of damage to the institutions which maintain transportation services. Any action leading to disorganization or disorder is forbidden.

2. Persons guilty of violating the above regulations shall be sentenced to hard labor and imprisonment for not less than three years. In special instances they may be imprisoned for not less than three months.

3. Persons guilty of instigating workers to strike or to violence against government, or to the destruction or damaging of the railway, in particular, agitators who call meetings with the above aims in view, shall suffer capital punishment. . . .<sup>27</sup>

An interpretation of the German treatment of the Ukrainian peasants is given by Mogilyansky, an Ukrainian liberal who was neither pro-German nor pro-Bolshevik. His account reads:

A state of anarchy was averted by force of German arms. How did the Germans behave in the Ukrainian village? It depended entirely upon the commanding personnel. I personally watched the Germans at their posts in the village of . . . Kiev Guberniya. They did not provoke any irritation or ill feeling among the population. In this village the Germans paid regularly for the food which they took from the peasants, and they did not harm the people in any way. In other localities (I have read a number of official reports and the findings of investigations) open and shameless looting took place. There were a number of places where the landlords used the German forces to restore their rights in the village and particularly to retrieve their stolen property. This sometimes

<sup>27</sup>B. Kolesnikov, *Professionalnoe dvizhenie i kontr-revol'yutsiya*, Ukrainian State publication, 1923, p. 82.



led to such conflicts that the Germans were obliged to use artillery. On the whole the population submitted to violence, realizing that it was hopeless to oppose it. "What shall we do, sir?" said the peasant from the village, "the Germans pay a ruble per *pud* for hay when the price is eight rubles. They take bacon from us and pay one ruble per *funt* [1 *funt* = 0.9 American lbs.] when the price in Chernigov is five rubles. Tell us, what shall we do? Shall we give them what they ask or not?" I answered: "You know that our soldiers, and among them the men from your village, left the front and in spite of warning and persuasion decided to end the war. The German soldiers came with arms. They obey their officers' orders. If you do not give them what they want, they will take it anyhow and in that case they will not pay for it at all. If there are no Germans, then the Bolsheviks will come and they, you may be sure, will not pay at all. When we have an army of our own which will obey its officers, then it will be possible to offer resistance to the Germans. But without such an army we are being and shall be maltreated!"<sup>28</sup>

As for the Germans, they did not deny that their policies were dictated by the needs and interests of themselves and their allies. Some time after the event, General von Kuhl testified that the authorities considered the occupation necessary, but some were of the opinion that it should have been carried out earlier, in 1915 or 1916, as a means of putting Russia out of the war. In 1918 food had to be secured from the Ukraine to prevent a catastrophe in Austria. Von Kuhl then adds:

Now, it cannot be denied that the hopes we had set upon the Ukraine were disappointed to a certain extent. . . . It seems that the organization which was adopted with the object of exploiting the country did not answer the purpose. It has been pointed out that in place of the numerous official bodies, which consisted of men from the weak Government of the Ukraine, German and Austro-Hungarian delegates, and the commanding officers of the German and Austrian army-groups, a strict military authority would have undoubtedly accomplished more. It has been shown how much harm was done by reckless interference by the Austrians. The transport difficulties were also hard to overcome. It was constantly pointed out to the Supreme Command that the military forces occupying the Ukraine were too small and must be strengthened if we were to obtain from the country the expected benefits. . . . [Nevertheless], Austria was saved from starvation. The deliveries of meat for us were considerable, and, above all, the horses supplies were of great importance. Finally, it must be remembered that the organizations of exports was just beginning to work and to take full effect when we had to evacuate the Ukraine in the autumn of 1918. . . .<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup>N. M. Mogilyansky, "Tragediya Ukrainy," in *Arkhiv Russkoi Revolyutsii*, XI, Berlin, 1923, p. 97.

<sup>29</sup>"The Relative Strength of the Forces [Report of General von Kuhl]," in *The Causes of the German Collapse in 1918; Sections of the officially authorized report of the Commission of the German Constituent Assembly and of the German Reichstag, 1919-1928, the selection and the translation officially approved by the Commission*. Selected by Ralph Haswell Lutz, Stanford University, 1934, pp. 57-58.

In spite of the Germans' firmness and the feeble efforts of Skoropadsky's punitive detachments, opposition to the occupation and to the Hetman did not abate. The Bolsheviks were not the only party leading and stimulating this movement. Notable in this campaign were the Socialist Revolutionaries who resorted to the tactic of assassination which they had used against the tsarist regime and were later to employ against the Bolsheviks. With great care and secrecy the S. R.'s planned the death of several high Ukrainian and German officials, among them Skoropadsky and von Eichhorn. Skoropadsky escaped; von Eichhorn did not; and one of those in the plot tells how the German Field Marshal was killed:

... There were only a few of us. . . . We succeeded in establishing the hour at which Eichhorn left his house for his military headquarters situated only a few houses from his dwelling. He came out exactly at one o'clock, and went on foot, carrying a stick and accompanied by his adjutant. . . .

Skoropadsky was watched also, mainly at night. After one in the morning fashionable carriages were brought to his house and the "courtiers" of the Ukrainian Hetman, dressed in national costumes, descended the brightly lighted stairs. Among them would be the Hetman himself, dressed sometimes in civilian clothes and sometimes as an ordinary Cossack. The whole crowd then went to the nearest monastery, situated on the outskirts of the town, in order to amuse itself. . . .

Under a great nervous strain, with deep furrows around his mouth which expressed both suffering and determination, each day offering to sacrifice his life, each day saying good-bye to his friends and to the world about him, Donskoi [assigned to carry out the assassination] left us daily to fulfil his terrible task. We went with him as far as the corner of the street, met him during the hour interval when Eichhorn was at his headquarters and awaited the sound of the explosion which was to mean the end of the enemy. He returned nervously upset, shaken and embarrassed with his failure and told us how he was prevented from acting because a cabman suddenly appeared between him and Eichhorn, or because children were playing close to Eichhorn, or because he had not succeeded in meeting Eichhorn at all. Once he actually seized the bomb to throw it, but the top, which was badly fastened, came off and rolled to the general's feet. Boris [Donskoi] bent over, picked up the top and began to screw it on in front of every one and in such a businesslike way that no suspicion was aroused. His make-up and clothes were constantly changed. . . .

On July 30, at about one o'clock, we parted from him as usual at the corner of the Lyuteranskaya [street]. A quarter of an hour later, he returned without having met Eichhorn. We talked and then parted again about two o'clock. Five minutes later a loud explosion was heard. Had the explosion occurred by accident . . . or was Eichhorn killed? We did not know, but we realized that Boris would not return to us and this we frankly acknowledged to ourselves. . . . We were seized with a terrible anxiety to know the result of the explosion.

We went to Kreshchatik [street] and then to the Lipki district pretending to be a promenading couple. A crowd was running from the opposite direction.

Lipki was already surrounded by troops and people were not allowed to enter. We could hear disjointed sentences: "The commander-in-chief is killed, his adjutant is wounded," or "His adjutant is killed and the general is only slightly wounded. The assassin was shot." We went to the Botanical Garden and cut a mark on the thick trunk of the chestnut tree, the agreed sign to our party comrades that our task had been accomplished. We then took a cab and went to Svyatoshino [where they lived] to await the evening papers and rumors, and to get ready for our second task, which we hoped to accomplish within a few days. . . . The evening papers told us that the assassin had revealed his name, that the Field Marshal had lost his leg in the explosion and that he was on his death bed, that Skoropadsky was with him, that the adjutant had been killed, and that several persons were arrested in the streets and among them the driver of a cab into which the assassin had jumped in an attempt to escape. The morning papers informed us of the death of Eichhorn, and of several additional details about Boris. . . .<sup>30</sup>

Von Eichhorn's death did not, of course, end the occupation, which came only after the defeat of Germany in the west, but the intervening months were months of continuous discontent and opposition. Soviet Russia was officially at peace with Germany, yet beneath the façade of diplomacy, Imperial Germany endeavored to establish her power on a firm basis by creating a series of states stretching from Finland to the Caucasus, with the intention of isolating Soviet Russia from Europe. The Russian Bolsheviks, in turn, did what they could to incite the Ukrainians against the Germans and to persuade the soldiers of occupation to revolt against their leaders. Ultimately, these tactics bore fruit, but only after the morale of the home front and the troops of the Central Powers had been broken by failure to win a final victory in the west.

<sup>30</sup>I. Kakhovskaya, "Terroristicheskii akt protiv gen. Eikhgorna," in *Letopis Revolyutsii*, Berlin, 1923, I, 216-218. For fuller account by the same author, see Irène Kachowskaja, *Souvenirs d'une révolutionnaire*, Paris, 1926.

## Book Reviews

PARES, BERNARD. *Russia*. New York, Penguin Books, 1940. 256 pp. 25¢.

This new book by Sir Bernard Pares defies classification. It is a delightfully informal discussion of Russia, in which history and politics, scholarly analysis and personal recollections are mixed together in a most skilful and effective fashion. There is something peculiarly intimate about the book, and the reader has the pleasant feeling of a direct contact with the author. The tone of the discussion is frankly conversational, which by no means detracts from its high literary quality. This book is written in a beautifully simple and racy English, and it abounds in happy epigrams which will remain in one's memory. I shall cite but a few examples. Of Peter the Great the author says that "he took Russia by the scruff of her neck and threw her into Europe." The Czechs are described as "Slavs who were taught by Germany to counter German measures with German effect." The position of scholars under Soviet censorship, and the fact that in spite of it they still contrive to interpret Marx in their own individual ways, calls forth the following remark: "It was as if under the piecrust the blackbirds were still managing to sing their own various tunes." And finally, we have this brief and yet complete formula for the party strife in Russia at the end of the N.E.P. period: "The main distinction was between a right wing which said, give the country what it evidently wants, and a left wing which said, practice what you preach."

The book begins with a discussion of the country and people ("The Russians—and others"), which is followed by a brief sketch of Russia's historical development from the origins to the Revolution. In this part, occupying the first one hundred pages, the author offers a

summary of his views which had been expounded in much greater detail in his previous historical works. The second and larger part (over one hundred and fifty pages) deals with Soviet Russia, and here to a large extent Sir Bernard is treading upon a ground which had not been explored in his earlier writings. Of particular interest are the last chapters, dealing with Russia's policies during the present international crisis. Written before Hitler's invasion of Russia, these chapters have been dictated by a political motive which the author does not try to hide. "Many of us have thought throughout in terms of Bolshevism and not of Russia, though Russia was obviously always far more permanent and important; and that is a mistake, which this book is another belated attempt to correct." It was this sense of historical continuity that undoubtedly enabled Sir Bernard to retain his faith in Russia even after the Moscow pact of 1939. In a more personal way, this sense of continuity is reflected in those truly touching pages in which the author tells us of his joy at discovering, behind all the momentous changes brought about by one of the greatest upheavals in world's history, many a familiar trait of the same "dear old Russia."

It is a pity to look for flaws in a book from which one has derived so much enjoyment, but the stern duty of a reviewer forces me to indicate factual errors and to express my disagreement with the author on certain points of interpretation. The former are few, and can be dealt with briefly. The National Assembly convoked by Ivan IV was not "the first elected assembly" in Russian history, because, at that time, deputies from all groups were still appointed by the government. The first Romanov was not elected "because he was the son of a

Patriarch." It was the other way around: Philaret was made Patriarch because he was the father of the Tsar. One wonders how Aleksei Tolstoy's play dealing with Tsar Feodor could be withdrawn by the pre-revolutionary censor "as obviously a clever if sympathetic sketch of the futility of Nicholas II," when it was written long before Nicholas II's accession to the throne. And finally, the Kerensky offensive took place in the early summer and not in the autumn of 1917.

It was with some surprise that I read the author's statement that the effects of the Emancipation of 1861 "made revolution inevitable." Generally speaking, I do not believe in such long-range causation in history. Such a long period of time separated the two events and so many things happened in the interval that to try to establish a cause and effect relationship between them seems to me a questionable procedure. Moreover, has not Sir Bernard himself shown in his book on *The Fall of the Russian Monarchy* that, strictly speaking, revolution was not inevitable even as late as 1915?

The other major point in which I disagree with the author is his all too lenient interpretation of the Stalin Constitution. To say that it "looked almost amazingly like the liberal program of the Zemstvo," is to ignore the characteristic reservation which accompanies the granting of civil liberties in the Stalin Constitution: they can be exercised only on condition that they do not conflict with the interests of the workers and the purposes of socialist construction, and of course, it is the government that decides when they do and when they do not. There were no such strings attached to the program of the Zemstvo constitutionalists. They were honest and sincere liberals. Likewise, the provision which grants "any legalized association of citizens . . . the right of putting up candidates," which the author emphasizes, reveals its proper meaning only when it is read in conjunction with an-

other clause, which, in fact, imposes upon every one of these organizations obligatory communist leadership. In this, as in any other case, the only test of the liberalism of a régime is the degree to which it is willing to grant the opposition real freedom of action.

There are some other controversial points with regard to which I do not find it possible to see eye to eye with the author. And yet my last word will be an urgent appeal to all those interested in Russia to read this stimulating and valuable book. It commands respect and attention as a fruit of lifelong study and meditation and, above all, of that sympathetic understanding which has made Sir Bernard Pares the most outstanding interpreter of Russia to the Anglo-Saxon world since the days of Mackenzie Wallace.

MICHAEL KARPOVICH

*Harvard University*

CURTISS, JOHN SHELTON. *Church and State in Russia: The Last Years of the Empire, 1900-1917*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1940. 442 pp. \$4.00.

Here is a solid and extensive piece of research which has the merit of being readable from beginning to end. The subject-matter is so vital, the pages so crowded with events of human interest that the reader, whether lay or specialist, will seldom find his attention flagging.

The first chapter, modestly entitled "An Outline of Church History to the Year 1900," presents the background for the story that is to follow and sets the theme clearly heard in the bugle notes of that *ukaz* of Peter the Great which replaced the Patriarchate by the Synod.

Three hundred and seventy octavo pages are devoted to the period between 1900 and 1917, with brief excursions into the past for corroborative material. A wealth of authenticated detail is brought to bear upon such questions as the diverse sources of income of the clergy and the monasteries, the treat-



ment accorded by the government to dissenting sects, propaganda in behalf of orthodoxy, attempts at ecclesiastical reform. And at every turn evidence is presented to show that the church endorsed the policies of the state. We are told that when the Revolution of 1905 broke out, the church took its stand with autocracy, even allying itself after a time with such reactionary bodies as the Union of the Russian People, and finally accepting the dictation of the dissolute Rasputin.

In support of his thesis the author draws upon an impressive array of authorities. To the Russian material in this country, important and abundant, be it said, he has added that taken from documents in the Leningrad Division of the Central Historical Archives of the U.S.S.R. The latter would doubtless have been more extensive had there been a catalogue at his disposal or had he been allowed access to the shelves. It is possible, also, that the Russian Archives in Prague might have yielded something not to be found elsewhere. The bibliography lists no less than twenty Russian journals, but with a few exceptions gives no indication of the period covered by the author. Some light on this point, however, is to be found in the specific references in the footnotes.

It must be said that the author is thoroughly aware that in so controversial a subject all material must be handled with great caution. He seldom fails to note a damaging circumstance, whether personal bias or something else, which must be taken into account in evaluating a given piece of testimony. The reviewer is impressed with the fair-minded analysis of the material assembled from such widely different sources, but does not find herself in complete accord with the author's final judgment. Certainly, there is much to be said for his contention that in the period under consideration the church was the unequivocal ally of autocracy. That the Over Procurators with one exception, the Holy Synod

with brief and partial lapses, and a whole army, so to speak, of ecclesiastics high and low put themselves on record as ardent defenders of the reactionary government is undeniably significant. But it must be remembered that the Over Procurator was appointed by the Tsar, that he determined the membership of the Synod, and that the real administration of the church from top to bottom was in the hands of lay officials. Immense pressure was brought to bear upon the clergy to serve the interests of the state, but the numerous examples of those who bowed to authority do not tell the whole story. The author himself speaks of priests who held liberal views but, while acknowledging that there are no statistics available, he concludes that they numbered only a fraction of the more than forty thousand in Russia. Perhaps that was not the case. The opposition might well think it wiser to avoid the publicity that was sure to bring with it a penalty. On the other hand, both state and church organs were quick to print endorsements of the governmental policy, eager as they naturally would be to prove that the country was behind the Tsar. And must we not reckon with that great body of communicants, sadly depleted in number to be sure, who held fast to Christian teaching? Rottenness, and in no small measure, there certainly was in the church, but it was mainly to be found in the ecclesiastical machinery. The core of the church, the inner faith, remained sound. How else can we account for the persistence of persecuted congregations in the home land? And what was it that made Russian refugees in foreign countries rally round the church as a sure tower of strength in their hour of need? But such reflections as these do not in any sense invalidate the work in question. It stands as a great contribution to our knowledge of an historical phenomenon that has awakened world-wide interest.

*Vassar College*

LUCY E. TEXTOR

ALLEN, W. E. D. *The Ukraine: A History*. Cambridge, The University Press and New York, Macmillan, 1940. 404 pp. \$4.50.

DOROSHENKO, D. *History of the Ukraine*. Translated from the Ukrainian and abridged by Hanna Keller. Edited and Introduction by G. W. Simpson. Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, The Institute Press, Ltd., 1939. 702 pp. \$3.50.

HRUSHEVSKY, MICHAEL. *A History of Ukraine*. Edited by O. J. Frederiksen. Preface by George Vernadsky. New Haven, Yale University Press. Published for the Ukrainian National Association, 1941. 629 pp. \$4.00.

The three volumes under review shed much light on the history of Ukraine, whose fortunes are being once more decided on the battlefields of Eastern Europe. W. E. D. Allen, an Estonian, and chairman of David Allen and Son, Ltd., has served as a special correspondent of the London *Morning Post* in Anatolia and in Spanish Morocco, and has written extensively on the Turks and the peoples of the Caucasus, especially the Georgians. His latest volume, *The Ukraine*, displays a truly remarkable erudition and a thorough knowledge of the pertinent literature in some ten languages. The approach of the author is that of an enlightened conservative who is rightly critical of many aspects of the Soviet experiment in Ukraine as well as of the excessive and unwarranted claims of the Ukrainian nationalists, although he is by no means unsympathetic to their legitimate grievances. Mr. Allen endorses the view frequently expressed by Russian and Polish historians when he writes that "it is hardly possible . . . to discuss the question of a distinctive 'Ukrainian' nationality and its origins, before a peculiar combination of historical factors operating between 1590 and 1700 produced a community on the borderland of the Polish realm which

became united by common economic and political circumstances, the vast majority of whose members confessed the Orthodox Greek faith, and which made use of a form of Russian speech—itsself continuously subject to modification and adoption in accord with the circumstances of day-to-day social and economic life" (p. 65). Mr. Allen reminds his readers that the rise of the modern literary Ukrainian nationalism goes back merely to the middle of the nineteenth century and that it was particularly fostered in the Austrian part of Ukraine where it assumed a distinctly separatist character. This movement, however, "had roused little interest among the people of Russian Ukraine" and "was confined to a relatively small band of intelligentsia." At the turn of the century, writes Mr. Allen, "the rural masses were hardly aware of its existence" (p. 253). The somewhat artificial and academic character of the Ukrainian movement was undoubtedly largely responsible for its lamentable failure during the eventful years which followed the Russian revolution of 1917.

Written against the background of the broader trends of European history, packed with facts and illuminating observation, Mr. Allen's readable and up-to-date volume provides a mass of information on the political, social, economic, and cultural history of Ukraine. This is a timely book which should be consulted by all those who desire to gain an insight into the deeper implications of the recent eastward expansion of Germany.

The volumes by Professor Hrushevsky and Dr. Doroshenko are more in the nature of a special plea. Both authors had played a leading part in the Ukrainian separatist movement and had been closely identified with the most militant brand of Ukrainian nationalism. Imperial Russia and the Soviet régime have treated them with almost equal harshness. Professor Hrushevsky is a distinguished historian who has made valua-

ble contributions to the history of his native land. His *History of Ukraine* is the translation of a volume first published in 1911 and brought up to date partly by the author (who died in 1934) and partly by the Editors. Dr. Doroshenko's *History of the Ukraine* is an abridged translation of a two-volume study which appeared in Warsaw in 1932-1934. The Hrushevsky and the Doroshenko volumes contain much interesting information, presented, however, from the point of view of the extreme Ukrainian nationalists. The more cautious students of history will find it useful to check the theories and findings of the two eminent Ukrainian historians against those so admirably expounded by Mr. Allen in his critical and judicious study.

MICHAEL T. FLORINSKY

Columbia University

WHEELER-BENNETT, JOHN W. *The Forgotten Peace, Brest-Litovsk, March 1918*. New York, Morrow, 1939. 498 pp. \$4.00.

This book appeared some time ago, but in the light of the new development of the second World War it becomes a book of prime interest to any student of international affairs, psychology, or history. In a clear and concise way the author describes the situation in Russia prior to the Bolshevik revolution. His portraits of Nicholas II, of Kerensky, and of Lenin are drawn masterfully.

The limited comprehension of the situation, the willingness, especially of Trotsky, to sacrifice the interest of the cause for the benefit of sharp repartee, is vividly described in the chapters dealing with the preliminary armistice. The formula invented by Trotsky to terminate the bickering at the conference table at Brest-Litovsk, "No War-No Peace," is presented with great accuracy and deep understanding. The fact that only Lenin realized that this paradox would not stop the German army from occupying a large part of Russia, which could be saved by simply signing the

first draft of the peace proposed by the Germans, indicates that Lenin alone retained the analytical capacity necessary to cope with the tragic situation of the Bolshevik party.

Lenin himself agreed to give this formula a try to prevent the splitting of the party. According to him, a good Marxist would sacrifice any country to keep the party intact. Result: "a Tilsit peace," a peace by which Germany expected to relegate Russia to the rôle of a second-rate power, to the rôle of an agricultural colony. Lenin did realize long before his associates that the World Revolution was not around the corner; but he also realized that the virus of Bolshevism would sap the strength of the German army. He was willing to pay any price for the breathing space. The fact that the Brest-Litovsk peace influenced President Wilson and is responsible for some of his famous fourteen points is interesting to Americans.

At present, however, the peace with the Ukraine and the description of the aftermath of both the Brest-Litovsk and the Ukraine peace are of special interest. Many valuable conclusions, many analogies can be found in the chapters related to these events.

The Germans and the Austrians were not able to obtain the food which was essential for them from the Ukraine; for the puppet government of the Ukraine, the *Rada*, was a make-believe government, supported by German bayonets and only as strong as these bayonets. General Skoropadsky, the Hetman of Ukraine, who replaced the *Rada*, was equally powerless to deliver the goods to the Germans. The disintegration of the German army through Bolshevik propaganda prevented the Germans from using these troops on the Western front. The Brest-Litovsk peace was the pattern of the Peace of Versailles. The incapacity of the German High Command to understand the psychology of the conquered people, their incapacity to govern directly or through puppet

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governments is vividly described. The analogy between the Brest-Litovsk order and the "New Order" is obvious. The first order fell, and in this fall inflicted a stunning blow to Germany, the blow of Versailles.

PETER STOGOFF

New York City

MAHANEY, WILBUR LEE, JR. *The Soviet Union, the League of Nations and Disarmament: 1917-1935*. Philadelphia, Priv. ptd., University of Pennsylvania, 1940. 199 pp.

In the four chapters comprising this book and dealing respectively with the Disarmament Proposals from 1917 to 1930, the Security Pacts, the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, and the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, Mr. Mahaney has undertaken to investigate the disarmament proposals made in the League of Nations, to examine the peace and disarmament policies and aims of the Soviet Union, and to ascertain the extent of Soviet participation in this particular aspect of the world's endeavor to eliminate war. The surprises which the Kremlin has given to the world during the past two years make particularly welcome any study pertaining to the behavior of the U. S. S. R. For, in the problems involving war and peace—Stalin is still an enigma.

Obviously not in a position to consult Russian materials, the author was forced to depend almost exclusively on the official publications of the League of Nations, with the unfortunate result that his work produced an historical rather than an analytical appraisal of the Soviet record. Under the circumstances, only one formal conclusion could be reached: that the Soviet government, while unfavorably disposed towards a mere "limitation" of armaments, was interested not only in a substantial but even a total reduction of armaments. Mr. Mahaney's view, however, that the

Soviets could afford such an extreme measure because to them "complete and general disarmament was necessary as the only means of ensuring a permanent world peace" is rather laconic and leaves many a question in the reader's mind still unanswered.

Even a brief analysis of the Soviet understanding of international peace, of the Marxian rôle of the army in the communist reconstruction of society in general, and of the revolutionary purpose of the Soviet Red Army in the post-war international picture in particular, would have added greatly to the explanation of the "maximum of confusion and the minimum of achievement," as the author puts it in his résumé, which took place at Geneva. Indeed, the reader might have learned that the world peace, as we understand it, to the Soviets cannot be an end in itself but is merely a provisional means to achieve their own revolutionary world peace in the guise of a stateless and classless commonwealth of nations. Then, he would have been reminded that it was Lenin who reduced the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat to "state authority resting directly upon violence" and that the latter is "not merely a fist or a club, but an Army." Still further, it would have been disclosed that according to the same authority the Communist motto must be "the armament of the proletariat for the purpose of exploitation and disarmament of the bourgeoisie" and that the slogan "disarmament" as stated in the resolutions of the VI Congress of the Communist International could serve "only as a revolutionary slogan." Finally, the reader would have been told that it was Marx himself who viewed the army as an integral component of the government and that, in the words of Stalin, the *raison d'être* of the Red Army was to "solidify the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country and to use it as a starting point for the overthrow of imperialism in all countries."



In view of all this, and irrespective of the dictates of practical expediency, the Soviets could well afford to favor such an extreme measure as total disarmament, for the Communist delegates went to Geneva fully cognizant of the fact that while their proposal was not to be accepted, their stand in the issue would enhance greatly their prestige as true peacemakers with the masses abroad. At the same time, the non-communist nations were fully aware that if the Soviet readiness to disarm proved sincere and was actually carried out, it would have connoted either virtual abandonment by the Kremlin of its whole program of world revolution, or a camouflaged wishful hope to accelerate communist revolutions in countries left without any force to quell the rebellion. Willing neither to believe in the suicidal tendencies of a communist state nor to jeopardize their own existence, the non-communist nations preferred to accept the Soviet overtures with caution and to appraise them accordingly.

A doctoral dissertation, Mr. Mahaney's book is a useful piece of conscientious work, with a rather brief bibliography and a well-composed index. It is not the fault of the author that by force of circumstances the historical treatment of the problem has rendered it merely another neatly compiled formal record of the international bargaining which terminated in today's bloodshed—a finale notoriously different from one envisaged by the solicitors of peace at Geneva.

T. A. TARACOUZIO

Harvard Law School

WILSON, EDMUND. *To the Finland Station; a study in the writing and acting of history*. New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1940. 509 pp. \$4.00.

At the beginning of our century, Albert Sorel, many years after Michelet, rediscovered Vico and attempted to confer upon him a retrospective or posthumous importance. Mr. Edmund Wil-

son's excellent work on the rôle of man in history begins with Vico and ends at the Finland Station in Petrograd, from which platform, in 1917, Lenin rushed so confidently to the seizure of power.

Vico's intuitions unquestionably oriented Michelet's thought and enriched his work, but it is difficult to perceive in the chapters which Mr. Wilson successively devotes to Renan, Taine, Anatole France, Babeuf, Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen, Enfantin, and finally Marx and Engels, Lassalle and Bakunin, a transmission connecting the Italian philosopher with the Russian revolutionary. One does not find, even in Michelet, Vico's transcendental conception of the three ages of mankind, as one re-discovers, in Lenin's simplification, Marx's "materialistic conception of history." It is apparent, however, that Mr. Wilson was conscious of a solution of continuity, for at the end of his book he feels it necessary to state in several lines why and how he associates Vico's thought with the action of Lenin.

This does not, in the least, diminish the great value of the biographic-historical sketches assembled by the author under this unexpected title, which show a vast culture and a profound knowledge of the social reformers of the nineteenth century, a period which he has extended from Babeuf to Lenin, that is to say, from the morrow of the French Revolution to the eve of the Russian Revolution. Certainly, debatable topics are not lacking in this work, and specialists will find in it many subjects for controversy. But for the larger public to which it is addressed, the essential factor is that Mr. Wilson has shown both rare ability and a sympathetic understanding of his characters, without which no real comprehension is possible.

Only the third part of the work, some one hundred pages, is devoted to Lenin and Trotsky. The author deals, primarily, with the years of their youth and apprenticeship, their intellectual development, and their preparation for the



great historic rôles which they were called upon to play. He does this with such a wealth of detail concerning their private lives that one cannot always follow the trend of the narrative which seems to imply an argument in favor of a definite thesis. Many of these details, justifiable as they may be, seem superfluous when they inevitably evoke in the reader questions which the author leaves unanswered; questions, moreover, which are aroused by the vivid interest of the book. Would not Lenin and Trotsky have assumed the leadership of the Russian revolution even if they had not been so profoundly influenced by Marx and Engels? Who knows whether the turn of events would not have been more beneficial to Russia and to the whole of mankind under leaders—Lenin, Trotsky, or others—had they been free from dogmatic theories?

One could argue indefinitely these and other questions implied in Mr. Wilson's book; but arguments of this kind always risk leaving one unsatisfied. At all events, it is hardly necessary to state that "To the Finland Station" can be placed among the best works relative to Marxism and Bolshevism. Such a book is an honor to its author as well as to the country in which it was published, and all the more so because of the contrast it offers to the trivial works produced, during the last years, by the European apologists and detractors of Marxism and Bolshevism.

B. SOUVARINE

New York City

EASTMAN, MAX. *Stalin's Russia and the Crisis in Socialism*. New York, Norton, 1940. 284 pp. \$2.50.

Max Eastman is an old hand at Marxian dialectics. His ideological education did not begin with the Bolshevik experiment although he was among the first American radical intellectuals to accept Lenin's program to establish a free cooperative commonwealth in industrially backward Russia. The prom-

ise of an experimental socialist state was sufficiently alluring to make Mr. Eastman overlook the reactionary implications of Lenin's plans and to use his influential pen in defense of the Bolshevik revolution. But as soon as he was convinced that the Soviets were being undermined by the dictatorship of the Communist party, and that the primary purpose of the Soviet leaders was the retention of power and not the emancipation of the workers, he voiced his disapproval in no uncertain terms.

In the present volume Mr. Eastman continues his discussion of the irreconcilable contradictions between Communist theory and practice, and their relation to the *débâcle* in the Soviet Union. He sums up briefly Lenin's early declarations—the passionate insistence on "all power to the soviets," the abolition of the army and the organization of a militia made up of the toiling masses, the international as against the patriotic outlook. The author compares these with the aspirations of the later Lenin when faced with the task of ruling Russia. The father of Russian Communism soon discovered that "the proletariat by itself not only could ever arrive at socialism, but could never arrive even at the idea of socialism."

The contradictions in Lenin's teaching are indeed legion. Mr. Eastman might have quoted the Lenin of pre-1917 who admonished the workers, "Without political freedom all forms of workers' representation will be a fraud. The proletariat will remain as heretofore in prison." There is his dictum in early 1918 that under proletarian rule industry would flourish because it would be managed by the workers in rotation. There is the Lenin of "The Soviets at Work" who discovered that "the hundreds and thousands must submit to the will of the one." The disharmony between complete political freedom and the subjugation of the many to the will of the one was reflected in Lenin's passionate demand, before he seized power

in 1917, for immediate elections to the Constituent Assembly, and his change of heart when he became aware of the tiny number of Bolsheviks chosen by the people.

All in all, Mr. Eastman seems to take Lenin's campaign speeches too seriously. Most of them were inspired by political opportunism rather than Marxian tenets. His conversion from a one-time opponent of the soviet idea, which he described as a bourgeois offspring of the socialist revolutionists, to a defender of "all power to the soviets" was a purely political maneuver which had nothing to do with Marxism. The soviets were the only instrument through which Lenin and his disciples could hope to get a foothold in Russia. Hence the ardent adherence to the soviets.

Mr. Eastman is more interested in demonstrating the flaws in socialist theory than in portraying the deterioration of a man. He is more concerned with the "crisis in socialism" than with the failure of the Communist Experiment. He uses Russia merely as an illustration. This, however, is not as easily done as one would imagine. It is difficult to ascribe the decline of the original Bolshevik ideals to Marxian socialism. The clash between all power to the soviets and government by a tiny minority of the élite is a fact which, once more in history, demonstrates the failure of a man rather than of an idea.

Originally, the soviets were not meant to replace representative democratic action. The Bolsheviks relegated to the soviets supreme power when they found it expedient and later transferred that power to the Communist Party and finally to one man—Stalin. Whether this process of degeneration would take place under a free socialist organization of society is difficult to say. Mr. Eastman believes that collectivization must lead to totalitarian rule and all the evils that Soviet Russia is heir to, and all his arguments are sound—in relation to Stalin's Russia. The socialization of

property was converted into state ownership, or, as Mr. Eastman puts it, ownership by a bureaucracy. Instead of an equitable redistribution of wealth, there is gross inequality and the wage earners are poorer and more oppressed than they were under Nicholas II. The state has become supreme in Russian life, and there is not the slightest evidence of its eventual disappearance, as Lenin promised. But it is the Communists, and not Marx, that are responsible for this deterioration.

As a scholar and friend of the toiling masses, Mr. Eastman is not merely bent on finding fault with the Marxian conception of society. His purpose is to make people who are sincerely interested in a more equitable distribution of social wealth re-examine Marxian theory in the light of Soviet experience. He would eliminate all obstacles in the way of realizing a truly free society, one which would be incontestably by the people and for the people. This is a thought-provoking book and should be read by all who are interested not merely in abstract philosophy but in the practical organization of life on a basis of political and economic justice.

MANYA GORDON

*New York City*

EFRON, ANDREW. *The New Russian Empire*. New Haven, Conn., The Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor Co., 1941. 130 pp. \$2.00.

The purpose of the author of this little book is not to describe, but to understand the contemporary Russian State; the term "empire" is misleading, for the "imperialistic" aspects of the Soviet Union have been left in the background. To achieve his purpose, the author ably confronts typical Soviet facts with Communist and National Socialist theories, and then applies to them a "dynamic interpretation of law" which, despite ingenious diagrams, remains rather obscure.

There is a very good section on the

Soviet Constitution of 1936 which is interpreted in terms of an apocryphal pledge of Stalin "to remain faithful to the desiderata of his great predecessor." Another good section is that on the Eurasian concept of Russian culture, entitled "A Theory of Isolation." The hastily written conclusion contains an almost incredible error: the author asserts that, when, in May 1941, Stalin took over the presidency of the Council of the People's Commissars, it was "for the first time in Soviet history that the actual leader had assumed the position of the official head of the executive department," and that "Lenin was satisfied with the rôle of General Secretary of the Communist Party."

Just the opposite is true: from 1917 till his death Lenin was the Chairman of the Council of the People's Commissars, and never was General Secretary of the Party; this position was created in 1922 for Stalin, and he is the only person to have occupied it. In any case, both Lenin and Stalin have been typical "party bosses," and in their hands the party has been the instrument of dominating the constitutional organization and the country. Whether they officially managed the constitutional organization, or did it in a covert manner as did Stalin until 1941, is a question of minor importance, and the stress laid on this by Mr. Efron is symptomatic of his overemphasis of "theory" and underestimation of "reality."

N. S. TIMASHEFF  
Fordham University  
GORDON, MANYA. *Workers Before and After Lenin: Fifty Years of Russian Labor*. New York, Dutton, 1941. 524 pp. \$4.00.

The thesis of this vigorous book is that for Labor, violent revolution does not pay. The best demonstration of this truth, it finds in the experiment of the Communist régime in Russia which has now been going on for nearly a quarter of a century. In that period, impressive achievements in industrialization and in

the mechanization of agriculture have been recorded; nevertheless, the experiment is a tragic failure because it has not brought about the economic and political emancipation of the masses which was its cardinal task and Lenin's avowed goal.

After twenty-four years of blood, sweat and tears, the mass of Russian workers receives lower real wages, and is more poorly fed and clad than in 1913. Women and children work at hard labor; labor unions are simply an agency of the government; piecework and the hated speed-up are the rule. The relation of the workers to the factory manager is much the same as in Tsarist and capitalist Russia, but strikes are a crime against the state. Under the modern feudalism of collectivized agriculture, the peasants are more exploited than under the Tsar. "Equality is outlawed—nowhere is the difference in wage scales among workers as great as in the 'Socialist State.'" The much vaunted new apartments, rest houses, and sanatoria are reserved for the new aristocracy, the privileged group of officials, favored writers, artists and "shock-workers." There is less freedom than the Tsar allowed. The dictatorship of the proletariat has become the dictatorship of Stalin.

The severity of this indictment will be a surprise to many readers, but the statements are well substantiated. In recent years we have witnessed a considerable "literature of disillusionment" about Soviet Russia but there has been no work like this, devoted to Russian labor. The sub-title of the book, "Fifty Years of Russian Labor," indicates the author's method, which is to compare the progress of the quarter-century before Bolshevism with that of the quarter-century of Communist rule. Many Gordon is well qualified to make this comparison, having known the old Russia and being a lifelong student of labor problems. She has digested a mass of material, mostly in Russian, and has

forestalled some Communist criticism by using the works of Soviet writers on the old régime. Evidently too, she has been a close reader of the Soviet newspapers, and her handling of Soviet statistics is skilful and perspicacious.

The chief merit of Manya Gordon's book is, however, its historical and organic view of Russia. We have had so many books which dealt with this or that aspect of Soviet Russia or with one person's experiences or impressions, that it is refreshing to find an author who can see the country as a whole and knows how to appreciate the past. Manya Gordon understands that Russia has always been a land of paradoxes, where, for example, an autocrat decreed legislation for a ten-hour day a hundred years before such a law appeared in the United States. Her awareness of Russia's poverty and backwardness does not blind her to the fact that on the eve of the World War "Russia was not the hopeless wilderness that many well-meaning Americans have since been led to believe," but rather a country with a rate of industrial development which, had there not been war and revolution, would have been as industrialized today as Soviet Russia—and more healthily.

The book is divided into ten sections, which again are broken up into seventy short chapters, a device which does much to lighten what for the general reader is bound to be pretty solid material. The first section deals with the twenty-five years before the World War when Russia was caught in the current of modern industrialization with all its attendant labor conflicts. The strange story of Zubatov and Father Gapon, members of the secret police who organized government-controlled unions (which would not stay controlled), of the Revolution of 1905 which scared the Tsar into granting a constitution, and of the rôle of the new Duma or parliament, is interestingly told. Then follow sections on labor in the Soviet state: unions, wages, housing, dress, factory conditions, social

security, education. The gap between theory and practice—the great Soviet weakness—is constantly brought out. An appendix contains the references, conveniently arranged by chapters, a handy chronology, and a satisfactory index.

In spite of its honesty and information, Manya Gordon's book can hardly be called calm and dispassionate. Indeed it is often bitter and sarcastic, but we have had so many books which gloss over unpleasant things or ignore them, such as that of the Webbs, that we can pardon some forthrightness on the other side. Moreover, it seems to this reviewer that in criticizing the rate of expansion of heavy industry under the five-year plans, the author does not sufficiently take into account the motive of national defense.

The book closes with a tribute to the Russian people who have suffered so much throughout their history and never more than under the Communist régime which set out to emancipate them. No one has paid more dearly for the ideal of liberty, says the author, than the Russian people, and it is the fighting Slavs, "not the cultured, docile Germans, who are the hope of democracy in Europe; their victory will be the death knell of despotism the world over." These ardent words are reminiscent of the enthusiastic idealism of the Russian liberals of the past. But the way to freedom in Russia is still long and hard. The weight of poverty and ignorance must gradually be lifted from the masses, and their leaders, whether addressed as "Comrade" or "Excellency," must be educated and spiritually quickened, so as not to be dulled by the spectacle of such vast misery and ignorance into treating them with negligence and contempt.

W. CHAPIN HUNTINGTON

Washington, D. C.

HINDUS, MAURICE. *Hitler Cannot Conquer Russia*. New York, Doubleday, 1941. 299 pp. \$2.00.

Maurice Hindus assembles in his new



book on Russia much of the material gathered for his earlier works and a certain amount that is new. There are chapters on industrialization and collectivization, on the Stalin-Hitler Pact, on income distribution, intelligentsia, women, Cossacks, Ukrainians, Jews, Czechs, Poles, guerrilla warfare, perspective for revolution in Europe. All of these are evaluated, with varying skill, from one single standpoint: the degree to which they explain or strengthen Russia's capacity to resist invasion.

Because Hindus knows and loves the land of his birth and chief literary activity, much knowledge of Soviet life and institutions can be gleaned from these pages. Yet it is not a book to consult for such knowledge, since the presentation is unsystematic and continuously warped by the book's thesis and by the playing down of all things that might weaken it. This is not done by deliberate distortion or omission—Hindus is too conscientious a writer for that. Yet somehow it is done, in a variety of ways: by the method which lawyers know as "confession and avoidance"; by contrast of some features with palpable exaggerations of them by other writers so that the shock of what is said is diminished in comparison with the shock of what is refuted; by justification of negative phenomena as "inevitable" for Russia because "that's the way Russia is"; or—and this is the most disturbing feature of the book—by their justification, in ruthlessly pragmatic terms, as having contributed to Russia's capacity for war. But this test is a dangerous one. It sets Russia high in the scale of its values, but by the same token, point for point, it sets Germany even higher. The book abounds in unnoticed parallels between the two lands: censorship; regimentation of thought; book-burnings; crushing of political dissent; universal espionage; concentration camps; leader cult with doubt as treason; etc. When Hindus refers to these things in Germany he does so with passionate in-

dignation; pages away the same phenomena are cited for Russia, often with personal distaste, yet with something approximating approval. Thus, to give only one example of scores, youth labor conscription "looms as one of the most far-sighted policies the Kremlin has ever launched" (p. 62).

One of the alarming features of our time is the tendency of such normally humane and gentle folk as Hindus to adopt more and more of the criteria derived from the very system they abhor, on the ground that these elements strengthen a people for resistance to Nazism.

But this tract for the times should not be judged as a reasoned analysis of Russian life; rather it must be recognized for what it is, a passionate effort to document the thesis which provides the title of the book. It is quite likely true that "Hitler Cannot Conquer Russia"—particularly if this is construed in the sense of permanently assimilating it. It is also probable that Hitler cannot permanently organize Europe either, and that, by adding the vast Soviet Union to that already indigestible mass, he has bitten off more than he can chew. Yet, all through the book, a number of questions insistently obtrude themselves. Would the capacity of the already conquered territory to resist have been greater or less in the long run if the Russian people had retained more individual initiative? Would the staying powers of the rest of Russia have been greater or less if it had not been regimented into a belief that its leader was infallible and invincible? Has Russia gained or lost by sacrifice of much of its moral strength as a result of its method of acquiring greater material strength? If it had not taken part of Finland, Roumania, Poland, the Baltic States, as junior partner to Hitler, would it have gained more in the benevolence of those peoples than it lost in terms of a line on a military map? Has the loss of the power to dissolve the armies Hitler is



sending against it been fully compensated by the alleged superior efficiency of personal dictatorship and permanent martial law?

Since the book does not seriously raise nor attempt to answer such questions, it must be adjudged inadequate from its own standpoint, as an analysis of the Russo-German conflict and as a tract for our times.

BERTRAM D. WOLFE

Brooklyn, N. Y.

GETTMANN, ROYAL A. *Turgenev in England and America* (Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, Vol. XXVII, No. 2). Urbana, University of Illinois, 1941. 196 pp. \$2.00.

A proper discussion of the reputation and influence of the great Russian writers of the nineteenth century in England and America should be of considerable interest not only to students of the contacts between the three civilizations, but to every student of English and American literature. The Russian novel has exercised a very important influence on the course of the English and American novel during the last seventy years: it strengthened the turn towards an objective method, it encouraged a struggle with serious religious and metaphysical problems, it deepened interest in the psychology of the subconscious and the abnormal. Recently Miss Helen Muchnic has told the story in *Dostoyevsky's English Reputation* (Northampton, Mass., 1939) very well, and now Mr. Royal A. Gettmann, a pupil of Mr. Birnbaum at Illinois, has made a careful study of Turgenev's fame in England and America.

In England the story begins with the first notice of the *Sportsman's Sketches* during the Crimean War when the English public avidly searched for unfavorable pictures of internal conditions in Russia. In the 'sixties the first translations of Turgenev's great novels met with moderate success. But interest in Turgenev declined again and revived

only in the middle 'eighties with the victory of realism. Writers like George Gissing, George Moore, Arnold Bennett, Oscar Wilde, and others, praised him highly, and towards the end of the century a complete edition of the novels and stories was translated by Mrs. Constance Garnett. But the impact of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky—for whom Turgenev's fame had paved the way—diminished the stature of the older man early in the twentieth century. Mr. Maurice Baring was one of the first to formulate sharply the objections against Turgenev. But Turgenev gained new devoted admirers in England: John Galsworthy, Joseph Conrad, Ford Madox Ford, Virginia Woolf are among those of literary distinction. In the eyes of the general public and of most critics, Turgenev has, however, definitely assumed third place among the great Russian writers.

In America, the vicissitudes of Turgenev's reputation were somewhat different. Here Turgenev found fervent admirers as early as the 'sixties of the last century. He was highly praised by C. E. Norton, T. S. Perry, and especially by William Dean Howells. The latter inspired Henry James, who sought out Turgenev in Paris in 1875 and wrote several admiring articles which did not discuss him merely as a recorder of Old Russia but treated him primarily as an artist whose method of objective dramatic presentation strengthened James's own theory of realism. In Turgenev both Howells and Henry James found a model which was free from the deficiencies of French naturalism. In the late 'seventies *Virgin Soil* excited considerable interest as information on the Russian underground revolutionary movement, but, just as in England, the advent of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky caused a reaction against Turgenev. The championship of individual critics like William Lyon Phelps could not turn the tide.

This, in the barest outline, is the story

of Turgenev's reputation and Turgenev criticism as Mr. Gettmann tells it. He has done his work well, though one may wish that in the later section on the twentieth century he had disassociated English from American criticism. This would have brought out more clearly the reversal of rôles: in the nineteenth century, American interest in Turgenev was much greater, while in the last forty years, Turgenev has found far more devoted and important admirers in England. Mr. Gettmann should not have omitted George Saintsbury's discussion of Turgenev, accompanied by a rather absurd attack on Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, in his *Late Nineteenth Century* (1907), and should not have included Mrs. Rosa Newmarch in American criticism: she is an Englishwoman who lived in Russia and knew Chaikovsky. *Elizabeth: or the Exiles to Siberia* (1805) is not an English book, but a translation from Mme. Sophie Ristaud Cottin.

Good as Mr. Gettmann's account is, its inclusive title *Turgenev in England and America* suggests that he might have gone further into the question of the actual influence of Turgenev on the English and American novel. Mr. Gettmann is usually content with rehearsing the casual opinions of other critics on this point. He barely suggests influence on Howells, reviews merely what Miss Kelley has said on Henry James's possible dependence on Turgenev in her *Early Development of Henry James*, hints that Gissing, Bennett, and Galsworthy may be considered in this connection, and is positive only that Turgenev influenced George Moore's *Lake* (cf. p. 150). Though caution on questions of influence is commendable, and the hunt for isolated parallels has been deservedly discredited, the problem of influence is still with us and is surely the most important question a writer on Turgenev in England and America has to face. It would have been better to restrict the full discussion of sometimes trivial re-

views which usually only debate vague general questions of Turgenev's nationalism and pessimism in favor of a closer investigation of the actual novels written under the influence of Turgenev. A study of the later Henry James might have been rewarding, and certainly more could have been said on Gissing, Conrad, Swinnerton, Bennett, George Moore, and Galsworthy. A book like Galsworthy's *Dark Flower*, which must strike every reader as extremely similar to Turgenev, is not even mentioned. Thus there is still room for several studies of the actual impact of the Russian nineteenth-century novel in England and America: Mr. Gettmann has prepared the ground by his useful study of the reputation of Turgenev in England and America.

RENÉ WELLEK

University of Iowa

STRELSKY, NIKANDER. *Saltykov and the Russian Squire*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1940. 176 pp. \$2.50.

Satire is a dangerous medicine. It seldom does much good to the patient, and it may hurt, or even kill, the physician who administers it. It injures him that gives, and him that takes. For, after all, they are the same person. The satirist is part of the society that he is attacking, he suffers from its faults, and he is involved in its struggles to be cured, or to resist the cure.

At least that is true of one class of satirists—not the jovial, careless, optimistic type like Rabelais and Dryden, but the saturnine, pedantic men who think too much: Swift, Juvenal, and their like. Such was Mikhail Evgrafovich Saltykov, who under the pen-name of Shchedrin scarified Russian society with a series of bitter little sketches and two long novels during the middle of the last century. He attacked the Russian squires of the period just before and after the emancipation of the serfs with all the violence of a man who is trying

to free himself from a weakness which he despises. His family suffered grievously from what it took to be his description of it as *The Goloulyov Family*; his concentration on the vices of the squirearchy throughout his life shows a painful consciousness of faults connected with himself; and his last big work, *Bygone Days in Poshekhonie*, was almost openly autobiographical. It was inevitable that a man who identified himself so closely with his subject should suffer while he satirized it.

Perhaps that is the chief reason why his satire is not equal to the best. The Roman poet defined the satirist's art as *ridentem dicere uerum*, "telling the truth in a joke." Saltykov too often told the truth in grim earnest, and therefore abandoned many of the devices and advantages peculiar to the satirist. Mr. Strelsky has written an admirable introduction to his work, combining a brief but adequate biography with a survey of Saltykov's principal essays and short stories, a summary of his two great books, and expositions of the chief characters and types whom he described. His book is just the kind of work which one has so often wished to read, about an interesting but difficult author who is out of one's own field. He has given it direction by emphasizing Saltykov's main interest: the sinister master-serf relation between the squires and the peasants, which (in Saltykov's belief) not only ruined Russian economics but poisoned the morality and the character of the people. Wisely, Mr. Strelsky does not assert that his subject is as great as the greatest. For one thing, Saltykov did not write pure satire; and for another, he did not write pure novels. His books are too monotonously grim to be satire—indeed, even if we allow for the occasional glimpses of humor and fantasy, they are too uniformly narrative and descriptive to be satires in the strict sense of the word; and they are too partial to be first-rate novels. But it is impossible not to be impressed by the

power of Saltykov's character, and the richness of the Russian life which he mocks and defames in the vain hope of emending it.

GILBERT HIGHET

Columbia University

WRIGHT, J. F. C. *Slava Bohu: The Story of the Dukhobors*. New York, Farrar & Rinehart, 1940. 438 pp. \$3.50.

For nearly forty years the American and Canadian press have been publishing almost incredible stories of the naked pilgrimages of the Dukhobors, when groups of apparently sincere and respectable people tore off their clothes and marched around Western Canada in winter or summer in their birthday suits, much to the annoyance and confusion of the native Canadians, who did not understand such actions and were not even desirous of attempting to do so. At the same time, liberal Christian and pacifistic circles were shocked and outraged by the cruelty of the Canadian police toward innocent and peaceful Dukhobors whose only desire was to live the Christian life as they thought right and proper. The same people were martyrs and offenders and the result was unintelligible.

We must therefore be deeply grateful to the author of this book for presenting for the first time in English the story of the Dukhobors, and their quasi-divine leaders Peter Vasilievich Verigin and his son Peter Petrovich Verigin, from the time when the Dukhobors first encountered serious difficulties with the Russian government until 1940.

It is always difficult to analyze the mind of the fanatic and if the man is a fanatic in religion, the problem is still harder; for, side by side with absurdities in the opinion of the great majority of humanity, there are flashes of high inspiration and of noble, even if mistaken, beliefs. So it was with the Dukhobors. Many of their beliefs appealed to liberal minds everywhere and at the same time they themselves gave a strange interpretation to those beliefs.

To the Canadian and Anglo-Saxon religious tradition the actions of the Dukhobors were incredible and insane. They had been no less so to the imperial Russian government.

Mr. Wright's book gives an excellent picture of the circumstances that led to the Dukhobors' migration to Canada and of their life there. It is unfortunate that the author did not give selections from the Book of Life, their songs, and their mystifying creed. The book is deficient in this aspect, but it does give a full account of the actions of the leaders, their followers, and their struggle with the government. It makes clear the long policy of subterfuge and chicanery which the Dukhobors employed, and to the observant and reflective reader, it will bring home the extent to which freedom of religion is dependent upon mutual tolerance, mutual understanding, and the use of a common language with mutually accepted terms. The story of the Dukhobors is significant as a study of human psychology. It deserved to be written and the author has fulfilled his task conscientiously and effectively. The volume is one of the best histories of an unusual sect of religious fanatics that has appeared in recent years, and both author and publisher are to be congratulated upon it.

CLARENCE A. MANNING

Columbia University

MALKIN, M. M. *Grazhdanskaya voina v Soed. Shtat. Ameriki i tsarskaya Rossiya* [Civil War in the U. S. A. and Tsarist Russia]. Moscow-Leningrad, 1939. 331 pp.

M. M. Malkin is the first Soviet historian to have devoted an entire book to the subject of the Civil War in the U. S. A. and Tsarist Russia. The author covers not only the diplomatic relations between the two countries, but analyzes in detail the political and social position of the United States, describing Great Britain's and France's various attempts to intervene and Russia's reac-

tion to such moves. Malkin devotes almost one-third of his book to the interesting fact of the coming of Russian fleets to the shores of this country in 1863.

In his foreword, Professor Tarlé notes that the author, aside from sources based on "Marxist-Leninist classics," also used the Russian State Archives, contemporary newspapers and periodicals. Professor Tarlé adds: "If this book is translated into English, many American historians will be thankful for heretofore unknown facts. . . ." Unfortunately, the reviewer of this book cannot agree with this learned historian, as, despite the mass of documentation, Malkin does not reveal many new facts. Credit, however, must be given the author for disclosing the real originator of the famous expedition of the Russian fleet, the seventy-five-year-old Admiral Vasili I. Melikhov. The Admiral submitted his plan on May 28, 1863, when a Polish revolt and the threat of war with France and England were at their zenith. "Rely on no one," he wrote, "compose immediately a Naval Squadron and dispatch it with all secrecy to the open ocean to prey on the commerce of England and France." On June 23, Melikhov's project was drawn up and approved by the Tsar, but only on July 11, did the idea of sending ships to the United States crystallize. As the plan was secret, the American Minister in St. Petersburg was not informed. Instead, a letter was dispatched to the Russian Minister in Washington, Stoekl, asking him to find out if the American Government would grant the Squadron a "temporary stay for repairs and the taking on of supplies." America, it was stated, "is chosen because it is a power on whose neutrality we can rely." Stoekl was also instructed to communicate to Lincoln that "the fleet will stay in the ports of the United States until better times."

Malkin takes the position that the "legend" of the arrival of the Russian Squadron for the purpose of helping the



Union, is without foundation. The version of "help" has never been claimed by Russia, he maintains, and was circulated only in the United States until 1917, when Professor F. A. Golder disproved it. The author knows, however, that Russian historians published another version concerning this naval expedition as early as 1911 (*cf.*, for example, *Voennaya Entsiklopediya*, St. Petersburg, 1911, II, 385).

It is regrettable that the author makes no mention of a non-documentary state-

ment which appeared in the *Letters of Frank K. Lane* (New York, 1922), claiming that the American government decided to defray the expenses of the Russian Naval expedition of 1863, by deducting this sum from the price which was to be paid for Alaska.

This book by Malkin will, no doubt, be of interest to American readers, though his conclusions are not always convincing, and are not shared by this reviewer.

ALEXANDER TARSAIDZÉ

New York City

## Bibliography

### THE STATISTICAL PUBLICATIONS OF THE U.S.S.R.

By E. C. ROPES

For the proper functioning of a planned economy, directed by a central authority, an obvious necessity is an agency for collecting and publishing statistical material of every description, covering government finances, the operations of industry, trade and transport, the development of communications, and many other phases of the national life. For this reason, the Soviet government soon after the establishment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, formed the Central Statistical Administration, charged with the compilation of detailed statistical material gathered all over the country, and reflecting the interest of the government in recording conditions in many fields. The first important volume issued by this agency, in 1923, represented 5 years, 1918-23, during which the country went through a period of unification and reconstruction. It is entitled *Sbornik statisticheskikh svedenii po S.S.S.R.*, Moscow (Collection of Statistical Information Concerning the U.S.S.R.). The list of the 17 chapters is indicative of the fields covered: territory and population, popular education, criminal statistics (1923), military statistics (1925), utili-

zation of the soil, agriculture, industry, labor, trade (domestic and foreign), finances, cooperation, food situation in urban and rural areas, peasants' budgets, government procurements (grain and fodder), transport and communications, insurance and social security, and municipal economy. The volume contains 482 pages, and an index of 9 pages.

The next statistical compendium was issued in 1925, for the III Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R., it was called *Narodnoe Khozyaistvo S.S.S.R. v tsifrakh; Statisticheskii Spravochnik*, Moscow (Statistical Handbook), and contained some new material, on public health, agricultural production, and a supplement on the economy of foreign countries. An interesting appendix to the 786 pages of tables is a list of 127 publications of the Central Statistical Administration; these include the monthly "Statistical Bulletin" and other periodicals, as well as a census of industry, one of population, and many other statistical publications. An abridged version of this book was prepared in French for the International Statistical Congress of 1925.

In 1927 a volume was published en-



titled *Itogi desyatiletiiya sovetsoi vlasti v tsifrakh, 1917-1927*, Moscow (Totals of Ten Years of Soviet Power in Figures, 1917-27). The purpose of the book is to present the results of "socialist construction" in the period covered, and the progress made in developing the country. An English version of this book was also issued. Concerning the year 1927, a separate Statistical Handbook was prepared, the first of a series of annuals to be issued by the Central Statistical Administration, which had been reorganized in 1926: *Staticheskii spravochnik, S.S.S.R.*, Moscow. Other issues proposed were a Statistical Annual, and a Statistical Atlas. A similar was published for 1928; it consisted of 958 pages, including an index of 16 pages.

During the years 1928-32 a second reorganization of the government statistical service occurred, resulting in the formation of the "Central Administration of National Economic Accounting," which has remained in operation since then. It is subordinated to the State Planning Commission, and supplies the materials which the latter utilizes as a basis for the Five Year Plans. This agency published in 1932: *Narodnoe khozyaistvo S.S.S.R.; statisticheskii spravochnik*, Moscow (Statistical Handbook of the National Economy of the U.S.S.R.), of 670 pages, and an index of 18 pages. While the subjects covered were similar to those surveyed in previous handbooks, there is much greater emphasis on industry, both large and small, on the socialization of agriculture, and on labor in industry. Of special importance is the large number of tables giving figures for a series of years, or comparisons of recent years (1930, 1931) with 1921 or 1922, and even with 1913 where possible. A section also compares the U.S.S.R. with foreign countries in 30 pages of figures on industrial and agricultural production over periods of 10 or more years up to 1931.

Between 1932 and 1935 the new So-

viet statistical agency does not seem to have issued any large annual volumes. A small volume called *S.S.S.R. v tsifrakh*, Moscow (The U.S.S.R. in Figures), was published in Russian for the XVII Congress of the Communist Party, and in English to answer "enquiries made by various foreign institutions and organizations." The figures here, for the usual economic fields, cover the years 1928, 1932, and 1933, and are taken from the first volume of *Sotsialisticheskoe stroitelstvo S.S.S.R.*, Moscow (Socialist Construction of the U.S.S.R.), a new statistical annual, published in 1934. This and its two successors, published in 1935 and 1936, present a wealth of statistical material, often in great detail and for a number of years, covering every phrase of socialized industry and agriculture, government finance, labor in industry and on the farm, and all of the other topics included in previous statistical volumes. The first volume also has elaborate indexes, and appendices dealing with foreign countries; it contains 544 pages in all. The later volumes exclude the foreign appendix, and run over 700 pages each. Of the 1935 volume, an abstract in English was issued.

The above 3 volumes represent the high point of Soviet statistical information available in Russian, and have not been duplicated since. In fact, no statistical annuals have appeared at all since 1936. In 1939, however, there were issued two slim volumes, of 207 and 128 pages, respectively, entitled *Sotsialisticheskoe stroitelstvo S.S.S.R.* (Socialist Construction of the U.S.S.R., 1933-1938), and *Sotsialisticheskoe zemledelie*, Moscow (Socialist Agriculture of the U.S.S.R.), which are the latest attempts to reflect in figures the progress of industry and agriculture in that country. These "collections of statistics" were acknowledged to be made for the purpose of showing "the enormous successes achieved in all branches of socialist construction" between 1933 and 1938, the first years of the Second and Third Five

Year Plans; as compared with 1929, the first year of the First Plan, and with 1913. As can well be imagined, no figures that do not bear out the claims of growth and expansion are included. There are, nevertheless, many valuable tables reflecting developments in the U.S.S.R. during the period covered, and these books represent the latest detailed information available in print. Of particular interest are the final tables giving certain important statistics for each of the 11 constituent republics separately, a new feature in Soviet statistical publications.

In addition to the tables of foreign trade included in the various statistical volumes listed above, the Soviet government, through the Chief Customs Administration of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade, has for a number of years published monthly statistics of its trade with other countries, in constantly increasing detail up to 1936. In that year figures were given covering 1950 items of export or import, or both, often broken down into several sub-classifications. In the commodity-country tables nearly 200 items were shown. Trade turnover of individual ports and transit trade figures were also supplied. Since 1936 commodity-country tables have been omitted, and the number of items has been drastically reduced; since 1938 no foreign trade figures of any kind have been released. Each monthly issue contains not only the figures for the particular month, but also cumulative figures from January, the first month of the fiscal year, or in the years 1923/24 to 1927/28 from October 1. Values are given in rubles, calculated according to the official value of the ruble for the year in question; this value in recent years has had no relation to the internal purchasing power of the ruble. The ruble is therefore only a bookkeeping unit, the value of which fluctuates by government order.

The foreign trade statistics of Russia for the years of the first World War

stopped with 1915, and no compilation has been made, or at least published, of the customs records of 1916 and 1917. But figures were evidently recorded by the Soviet government from 1918 on, and were finally issued in 1931, in a large volume edited by Vinokur and Bakulin, called *Vneshnyaya trgovlya S.S.S.R.*, Leningrad-Moscow (Foreign Trade of the U.S.S.R. for 1918-1927/28); the last year was the fiscal year running from October 1 to September 30. The figures for 1918-20 cover very few items of export and import, reflecting the small trade turnover that was possible in those years; and the commodity-country division is given for only 1918 and 1919. With 1921, however, the old classification of 432 export items and 218 import classifications was restored, and commodity-country subdivision is reasonably complete. Figures of both exports and imports are divided into periods of 9 and 3 months, the latter forming the first quarter of the fiscal year 1921/22. Imports for 1921 are also listed by 16 customs districts, most of this trade entering through Black Sea ports. With 1921/22 trade in each direction is shown in detail, as a whole and by customs districts, with commodity-country figures compared with 1913 records from 1923/24 on. Of interest are two series of tables giving information on seizures of contraband goods, and returns from sales of goods confiscated at listed frontier points. These tables cover 56 pages of the total of 847 pages in the volume.

A second summary volume of statistics of foreign trade, edited by Voznesensky and Voloshinsky, was published in 1933, and covered the years of the first Five Year Plan, 1928-33. It was entitled, *Vneshnyaya trgovlya S.S.S.R. za pervuyu piatiletku*, Moscow. Tables in this book include exports of 496 items and imports of 219 items, the latter being often broken down into sub-classifications. Commodity-country tables are provided, also tables by commodity and totals of export and import by customs-

district. Transit trade is recorded by country of origin and destination, and by commodity. No record is shown, however, of contraband or confiscated goods.

From 1918 to 1932 a uniform classification of export and import commodities was followed, making comparisons in those years simple. From 1933 on a new classification system has been used, reporting imports in much greater detail than before. It is readily possible, however, to set up comparable classifications which can be studied during the entire period of post-war trade, from 1918 through 1936. Since the latter year, as previously mentioned, only group classifications are available, except for outstanding commodities; and since 1938 no figures of any kind have been released.

The above list of Soviet statistical publications is perhaps not complete, but it is believed to include all the most important volumes and monthly pamphlets issued by the federal statistical agencies since 1930. At various times the individual republics, particularly the Ukraine S.S.R., or cities like Leningrad or Moscow, have published volumes of statistics dealing with their own territory; or separate compilations have been made of sown area in agriculture, of education, of labor, or of some important industrial development such as electrification. The volumes mentioned, however, remain the chief source of statistical information released by the Soviet government for the country as a

whole, and reflect clearly the methods and the steps which have been employed to "build socialism," and to convert an agricultural country into one of a considerable degree of industrial development.

Soviet statistics cannot be checked or verified by study of non-government sources of information; they are therefore accepted by students of international developments as indicating trends and policies rather than as exact figures of, say, production of oil, size of the wheat crop, or the extent of collectivization of agriculture or of universal education. An exception may, perhaps, be made for the foreign trade statistics, which are recorded by a corps of special clerks trained in their field, who follow a definite routine. But the accurate gathering of thousands of daily, weekly, or monthly statistics, from all parts of the U.S.S.R., covering every economic development in that huge country, and their compilation and publication by the Central Administration of Economic Accounting in Moscow, is obviously a gigantic task. It is not surprising, therefore, that students of statistics do not yet place complete faith in Soviet figures as published, especially interim reports issued in the press. The large annual volumes, for which the three already published set a high standard, undoubtedly represent careful verification or correction of preliminary returns in the many fields covered, and the resumption of their appearance each year, when possible, will be welcomed by students of international affairs.

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